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His Uncle's Niece

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BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

His Uncle's Niece

A Rollicking Farce in Three Acts

By
RAYMOND W. SARGENT

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WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY
Publishers of Things Theatrical
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

1922

PS635
Z9S245

FEB -4 1922

©Cl.D 59846

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His Uncle's Niece

CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

RICHARD TATE, ESQ., *a rising young lawyer.*

FRANCIS FELTON, *the cause of all the trouble.*

DORA HALE, *very much attached to the "Cause."*

ALICE MALCOLM, *a close chum of Dora's.*

MRS. SARAH ANN MULLEN, *a woman of few words; from Happy Valley.*

SIMON F. FELTON, *Frank's uncle, who never makes a mistake.*

PHILANDER FILMORE, *"humble but wise."*

TIMOTHY HAYE, *gardener at Happy Valley Junction.*

SILAS SICKELMOORE, *the constable at Happy Valley.*

SCENES

ACT I. Interior of Francis Felton's and Richard Tate's bachelor establishment at Boston.

ACT II. Same as Act I. Afternoon of the same day.

ACT III. Exterior of Uncle Simon's newly acquired summer home at Happy Valley Junction. Evening; three days later.

TIME: Midsummer.

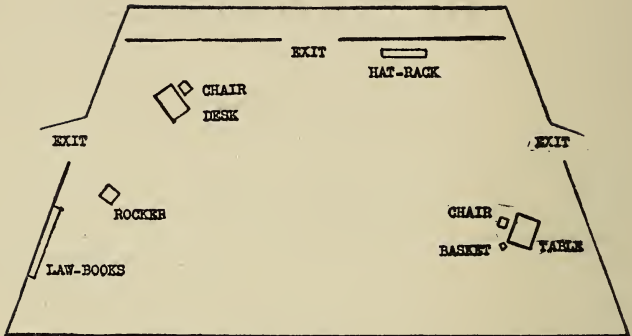
TIME OF PLAYING: Approximately two hours.



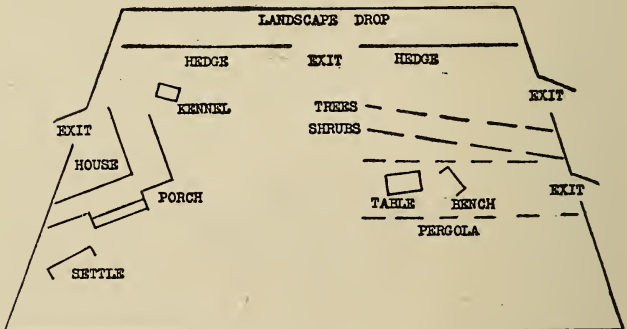
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STAGE SETTINGS



ACTS I & II



ACT III.

LIST OF PROPERTIES

STAGE PROPERTIES FOR ACT I.

Table, chair and waste basket, down L. Easy chair and coffee-pot, down R. Desk and chair, up R. Hat-rack, up c., left of door. Law books, writing material, magazines, knife, smoking utensils, necktie and collar, on table L. Towel on back of chair, L. Trousers hanging on hat-rack. Razor, alarm clock and hat, on desk. Socks on chair, R. Speaking tube near center door.

STAGE PROPERTIES FOR ACT II.

Same as at close of Act I.

STAGE PROPERTIES FOR ACT III.

Rustic pergola, down L., containing table and bench. Settle, down R. Dog kennel, up R. Broom leaning against pergola. Step-ladder, c. Japanese lanterns, strung across stage.

PERSONAL PROPERTIES FOR ACT I.

Three letters and coins, for Dick.

Parasol; hand-bag containing money, for Mrs. Mullen.

Florist box, containing roses, with tag, for Frank.

PERSONAL PROPERTIES FOR ACT II.

Ring for Alice.

Box of candy for Philander.

Parasol and hand-bag containing letter, for Mrs. Mullen.

PERSONAL PROPERTIES FOR ACT III.

Knife and billy, for Silas.

Pipe, containing tobacco, and matches for Frank.

Note and book resembling Bible, for Dick.

Lighted lantern for Mrs. Mullen.

Note for Frank.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

DICK. Age, twenty-five. Smooth face in Acts I and II. Plain business suit. Act III. Same suit and straw hat. To represent parson, a black soft hat, a Prince Albert coat; side whiskers on wire, and gray wig.

FRANK. Age, twenty-three. Smooth face in Act I. Face lathered, bath robe with no vision of trousers beneath. His next is a young man's business suit, and his feminine costume should consist of young lady's stylish gown, with stockings and shoes to match; and if Frank is dark, a lady's blond wig or vice versa. This costume to do for all three acts with the addition of cap and apron for Act III.

UNCLE. Age, about sixty-five. Wears spectacles, gray hair and short chin whiskers. Acts I and II. Light summer suit of any shade, dark preferred. Panama hat in Act I. Act III, Palm Beach suit, or white flannel trousers, and dark coat. No hat.

Owing to the reflection of light, it would be advisable for Uncle to wear only the rims of the spectacles without the glass.

PHILANDER. About fifty-five. Quite tall if possible; with bald head; hair turning slightly gray; dark mustache with drooping ends. Acts I and II. Dark suit. Wears rather small derby hat, and flower in buttonhole during Act I. Act III. Same suit with long linen duster and no hat, until just previous to his last exit, when he wears large soft straw hat.

Barrel costume: Large sugar barrel equipped with ropes like suspenders. His trousers are rolled up far enough to be hidden by bottom of barrel, exposing hose and garters; he is minus hat, coat, vest, collar and tie. If the producers see fit they may omit his outer shirt.

SILAS. About fifty. Smooth face, hair slightly gray at temples. Soft hat, gray checkered trousers, baggy at knees, and blue gingham shirt, dark vest with badge. No coat. Carries billy. Avoid shiny shoes.

MRS. MULLEN. About fifty. ACTS I and II. Neat looking suit and hat, but not of the present style; carries hand-bag. Do not make her clothes old fashioned, but portray her as she really is, a country lady of moderate means. Avoid burlesquing. ACT III. Calico wrapper, bare headed and carries apron under arm at first entrance, which she dons for the remainder of act.

TIMOTHY. About forty. Smooth face, blue checkered overalls (not new), and khaki shirt, open at neck, large straw hat, no coat or vest. Avoid shiny shoes.

DORA. About twenty. Slightly taller than Alice, as near Philander's height as possible. ACTS I and II. Stylish traveling suit and hat. ACT III. Light afternoon dress or shirt waist and sport skirt, as preferred. No hat. Last entrance: Large straw hat, long linen duster, collar and tie, dark trousers showing beneath linen duster. Philander's or duplicates. Dark drooping mustache, like Philander's.

ALICE. About twenty. ACTS I and II. Stylish traveling suit dress or shirt waist and skirt; but make it differ from Dora's. No hat in ACT III.

NOTE TO THE PRODUCER

The exits marked R. C. and L. C. in the third act indicate right and left of center opening in hedge. The R. and L. designating the direction from the center opening.

Near the close of ACT III when Philander enters in a barrel, it would be advisable to use a large sugar barrel so that he may be able to duck inside when Silas hits at him; where he stays until very near the close, when he pops his head out again. The barrel should be supplied with ropes, like suspenders.

The only masculine attire necessary for Dora to wear in the third act, consists of the trousers which are to show a little below the long linen duster; the collar and tie, the hat and the mustache.

Mrs. Mullen carries a lighted lantern when she first enters in ACT III.



His Uncle's Niece

ACT I

SCENE.—*Interior of FRANCIS FELTON'S and RICHARD TATE'S bachelor apartment, and office combined, at Boston. Exits C., R. and L. Table down L., also chair and waste basket. Hat-rack L. of C., desk and chair R. of C., back. Rocking chair down R., law books, writing material, magazine, knife and smoking utensils, L. on table. Towel on back of chair L. Trousers hanging on hat-rack, coffee-pot on floor R. Alarm clock, razor and hat on desk, socks on chair R., necktie and collar on table L. Speaking tube near door C. Aside from this, everything is much cluttered with men's belongings, etc., signifying that they are their own housekeepers.*

(*Curtain discovers RICHARD TATE in chair at table L. absorbed in law book.*)

FRANCIS (*off stage, R.*). Dick! I say, Dick! (DICK *absorbed in book.*) Oh, Dick! (*Enters R. in bath robe and lather on face.*) Seen my razor, old man? (DICK *still busy with book.* FRANK *crossing to DICK.*) Well!

DICK (*looking up*). Hello, old top; awakened from your beauty sleep at last, but why this exhibition of mad dog all over your beautiful phiz?

FRANK. As you are probably aware, we scions of Adam generally remove this camouflage with an implement called a razor, do you hear, a razor. Now, where is it?

DICK. Calm yourself, little shaver, and I will do my best to locate said instrument of torture. Methinks if

old soap suds should gaze upon yonder desk his wrath would turn to ——

FRANK (*discovering razor*). Thunder and lightning!

DICK. Undoubtedly.

FRANK. Ye Gods and little fishes, what have you been doing with this razor?

DICK. Tush, tush, old scout. Don't get refractory. I haven't used it to sharpen a pencil or rip out bastings, as would be the case if you had a gentle loving wife. I only borrowed it to open a can of sardines last night.

FRANK. Holy mackerel!

DICK. No, sardines! Or more correctly speaking, squeezed and squashed baby herring, who gave up their young lives on the coast of Maine to enable such as me to make a royal meal at home, while you were forced to partake of humble fare at that banquet you were obliged to attend last evening, or was it this morning? It can't be many hours since you homeward plodded your weary way.

FRANK. Do you expect me to shave with this hack saw?

DICK. I expect nothing, but you are at liberty to try. I'll admit that I had a difficult time with it on the sardines. I should say it needed a little sharpening.

FRANK (*at door R.*). Umph! Oh Dick! What are we going to do for breakfast?

DICK. Breakfast? You don't mean to insinuate that you are to eat again to-day?

FRANK. I won't say we will, but I am wondering where we will scrape up the necessary mazuma to supply our ample appetite.

DICK. In other words, how will we keep the wolf out of the hallway? Well, there is thirty-nine cents, and three letters; all for you. I mean the letters are all for you. (*Hands FRANK letters. FRANK opens first two and throws them on floor; opens third. Whistles.*) The usual butcher, baker and electric light bill?

FRANK. Worse! Oh, this is the last straw. I'm a doomed man. Read it. (*Hands DICK letter.*)

DICK (*rising and reading letter*). "Feltonville, N. Y.,

July 18. Dear Frances; As you are undoubtedly aware that the date of your wedding is only a few days off, I am leaving to-morrow for Boston. Your intended husband——” Husband! Say, what are you running, a matrimonial bureau, or a——

FRANK. Read on, I'll explain later.

DICK (*reading*). “Your intended husband will accompany me to make all preparations for the event. We will arrive at your residence at ten-thirty Tuesday morning. I hope you have grown into a beautiful rosebud of a girl, as I would very much like to see this a happy marriage. Yours affectionately, Uncle Simon.” A beautiful rosebud of a girl! Intended husband! Who's daffy now? You're not a doomed man, you're a dejected maiden.

FRANK. Allow me to explain. Before I was born, my Uncle Simon told my parents that if I were a girl I was to be his heir; that is if he should cease to tread this peaceful earth before I became twenty-three years of age, but if at that date he should still be alive I was to receive an endowment of one million, on——

DICK. Did you say one million? Um, thirty-nine cents.

FRANK. As I was saying I was to receive this endowment on condition that I marry the man of his choice, one Philander Fillmore. If I refuse, I receive nothing.

DICK. But you're—you, aren't you; that is you're a man, for a beard upon a woman's chin will never grow.

FRANK. Yes, very true, I'm myself but my parents up to the time of their death always gave my uncle to understand that I was one of those fair creatures that we men rave about, presuming, I suppose, that Uncle would be pounding his harp before I became twenty-three. Of course I have carried the farce along and here we are.

DICK. But has he never seen you?

FRANK. No: Uncle was a man who never traveled to any extent, and living in the country with more than ample means, he did not care to visit us in the city where we lived in cramped quarters. You see the name Francis was given me for the sole purpose of deceiving

Uncle Simon. You will also note that the letter is directed to Frances Felton; not Miss Frances. Some years back I requested him to omit the "Miss" as it caused trouble by becoming mixed with the mail belonging to the young lady next door, who was also a Miss Frances. So thereafter Uncle omitted the title of "Miss" on his letters to me.

DICK. Well, what are you going to do?

FRANK. Why, I'll have to throw up the sponge; that is all I know.

DICK. Thirty-nine cents! One million! Throw up the sponge, nothing! Carry the scheme out; think of that million.

FRANK. But how can I, when he is coming here with my—my devoted hubby to be, and the wedding must take place Friday.

DICK. Oh! I realize it looks utterly impossible but why not keep the thing going as long as possible?

FRANK. But I can't marry Philander. I wouldn't marry him even if he were a woman! There's Dora, you know.

DICK. Oh! I know you adore her. By the way, she and Alice are going to call on us this forenoon before going to the country.

FRANK. When am I to expect my uncle and dear beloved Philander to arrive?

DICK (*consulting letter*). "Ten-thirty Tuesday morning." Tuesday? Great Scott, to-day is Tuesday.

FRANK. Oh, what shall I do? When can I get a train?

DICK. Train! What on; my thirty-nine cents?

FRANK (*walking floor*). Oh, Uncle! Uncle! Oh, you million!!! Oh, Dora! Dora! Oh, Philander!!! Why was I ever born to be a girl to inherit a million, and find myself a man in love with a girl like Dora.

DICK. Say, put Dora on the shelf for a while, and I'll give you something to work on.

FRANK. What?

DICK. Well, I've thought this over and have come to the conclusion that we need that million!

FRANK. We need that million! We, eh?

DICK. Now look here, who is going to furnish the brains for this scheme? I am, of course, it being my scheme; and if you don't like it you can think of something yourself.

FRANK. Shoot.

DICK. The first thing you must do is to give me absolute control of this matter and do just as I instruct.

FRANK (*sitting R.*). I am ready to hear your pet scheme, but be quick; time is precious.

DICK. You are to disguise yourself as a girl.

FRANK. A girl! Holy mackerel! No!

DICK. As a girl, you are to accept this Philander person, and—and——

FRANK. And—and—what then?

DICK. That is all at present, but you are to follow my advice from now on and if the scheme is a success and you acquire the million, I am to become your lawyer at a salary, say, of one hundred dollars a week for the rest of my life, and——

FRANK (*rising*). Hold on, this is getting considerably one sided, and I am not over anxious to throw Dora over. I would not give her up for all the millions there are, so don't count your one hundred every week so soon.

DICK (*meditating*). Well, suppose I say that if you follow my instructions, I will guarantee that you will come into the million and also marry Dora. If she is willing.

FRANK. Oh, she is willing; she has said so, but we have to have more than——

DICK. Thirty-nine cents.

FRANK. Exactly——

DICK. Well, will you agree to these conditions and pay me the one hundred if I do what I claim?

FRANK. Yes,—but it can't be done——

DICK. Without a make-up, and I'm off now to procure a complete costume for you. As soon as I have the time I will draw up a legal document for you to sign. Hurry now and finish shaving. We have no time to lose. (*Starts up c.*)

FRANK. Where, how, with what are you going to pay for the costume?

DICK. Oh, that is easy; I'll charge it to you and you can draw on dear Unk when he arrives. [*Exit DICK, c.*

FRANK (*rushing to door*). Dick, try the thirty-nine cents. (*Coming down stage.*) Well, he may have an idea of what he is about, but blamed if I can see my way clear of this tangle. If I only had a little money now, I could do something, but what's the use of wishing for the moon? I haven't had a short story accepted for months. There is no use talking, I was never born to be an author. No, of course not; I was born to be a girl. Well, I must get down to business if I am going to put myself in Dick's charge. Let me see, he said to shave and be quick about it. (*Starting R., with razor. Bell rings.*) Hang it, who do you suppose that is? (*Goes to speaking tube.*) Yes! —Oh, yes, this is Mr. Felton speaking—What? Oh, that you, Dora? Surely, come right up. No! That is—wouldn't you like to go across the street and see the animals in the park? (*To audience.*) What am I saying? (*In tube.*) What's that?—Oh, I beg your pardon. Yes, come right up.—No, don't! I say, are you there? Hello. (*To audience.*) Gone! By George! And on the way up, I suppose; I can't let those girls see me in this attire, but I must get them out of the house before Uncle arrives with my dear Philander.

ALICE (*outside*). Not that door. [FRANK *exits R.*

(*Enter c., DORA and ALICE, with expectations of greeting FRANK.*)

DORA. Why, how strange, Alice. I wonder where they are?

ALICE. Oh, they are undoubtedly hiding, thinking to play a joke on us. We'll just make ourselves at home and they will soon come to their senses.

DORA. Do you really think it is perfectly all right to come here? You know; alone.

ALICE. Oh, yes; on business?

FRANK (*head in door R.*). Pardon me, girls, but will

you please excuse me for not entertaining just at present?
you see I'm—I'm ——

DORA. You're not sick?

ALICE. Of course not.

FRANK. Yes, I'm quite sick. Dick has gone for a doctor.

ALICE. Oh, I'm sorry.

DORA. Isn't there something we can do for you?

FRANK. No, thanks; you see, I'm entirely in Dick's charge and must do only what he thinks best. Excuse me, please. *[Exit FRANK, R.]*

DORA. How strangely he acts.

ALICE. I wonder if it's his head that is bothering him.

(They go to window up L. and look out.)

FRANK *(head in door R., aside)*. I wish they would go out for a walk.

DORA *(to ALICE)*. Don't you think we should do something for him?

FRANK. Dick thought it might be smallpox.

DORA *(running toward FRANK, calling)*. Oh, Frank! Frank!

(FRANK quickly closes door.)

ALICE *(holding her back)*. Be sensible, dear. Don't rush into anything wildly.

DORA. But if it should be smallpox?

ALICE. That is only a notion of Dick's and I think the wisest policy for us is to go out for a short walk and return after Dick has had time to get the doctor. I think Frank would rather sanction that idea.

DORA. Now that you mention it I think he did suggest something like that. *(They start toward door C.)*

(DICK enters C. with lady's costume on his arm.)

DICK. Well! Well! Speaking of angels and here I find ——

DORA. Where's the doctor?

DICK. Doctor?

ALICE. Yes, the doctor! Frank said you had gone for the doctor.

DICK. Oh, yes, the doctor. You see, I had quite forgotten about that; I couldn't get him.

DORA. Couldn't get him?

ALICE. Is there only one doctor in this city?

DICK. You see, this lady would only have this one special doctor.

ALICE. } Lady!

DORA. }

DICK. Yes, the lady, the lady; the sick lady.

ALICE. And I suppose these are her clothes you have on your arm.

DORA (*running to door R.*). Oh, Frank! Frank! (*Beating on door, which is locked.*) Let me in. I want to come in there; open this door.

FRANK (*off R.*). No, Dora, you must not. I can't let you in here. It may be smallpox, you know.

DICK. Yes, we think the lady may have a severe case of smallpox and we burned her clothes, so I was obliged to purchase some new ones to enable her to be removed when the doctor arrives with the ambulance.

DORA. What! Do you mean to tell me that she is in there? In there with Frank, and you have burned all her clothes. Oh! (*Throws herself in chair.*)

ALICE. I am sorry we came, but glad we have found you out.

DICK. My dear girl —

ALICE. Don't "dear" me.

DICK. My poor girl, then, allow me to explain. The lady we refer to is a very poor, blind lady, who is also deaf. Has only one leg, and will be ninety-eight her next birthday, and is the mother of fourteen grown-up darky boys. She takes in washing, and naturally has many outstanding bills that she cannot collect. So, being one of my clients, she appealed to me for help and here she is.

ALICE. But why here in your room?

DORA. Yes, please explain that.

DICK. Why, she came to wash the floor this morning, and ——

ALICE. Wash the floor, with one leg?

DICK. Oh, yes; she washes with her hands. And as I was saying, she came to wash the windows and was taken sick, and—eh—and we are doing our best to have her removed to the hospital without being quarantined ourselves.

DORA. But why does not Frank come out?

DICK. Dora, you see, he can't come out here until he has been fumigated.

ALICE. Will they fumigate soon?

DICK. Oh, yes.

DORA. How soon?

DICK. In a few minutes. (*Jumps.*) What was that? Did you hear that bell?

DORA. No.

ALICE. I'm sure I didn't.

DICK (*goes to the tube*). Hello, yes, is that you, doctor? You say you have the fumigaters and the board of health with you.—Good—What?—Oh, yes—and three police officers and the ambulance are outside. All right; thank you.

ALICE. } What shall we do?
DORA. }

DICK (*going to door L.*). Quick! In here, and don't you dare come out until I open the door.

DORA. It won't hurt to peek just a little, will it?

DICK. Yes. There will be an officer stationed right in this room and if he should see you, you would be compelled to stay here for weeks. Quick! I hear them coming. (*Exeunt DORA and ALICE L. DICK closes door. Heaves a sigh. Stamps about room speaking rather loudly all the time during the following scene.*) How do you do, doctor? Right this way, gentlemen. So glad you came. Take a chair, officer.

(*Thumps chair on floor L., and hangs towel on door-knob L., stamping all the time.*)

FRANK (*head in door R.*). Dick, give me those

trousers, quick. (DICK *passes trousers and woman's costume to FRANK.*) I can't put this dress on now.

DICK (*still stamping*). You must.

FRANK. No, later, after they're gone.

(FRANK *disappears.*)

DICK. Well, doctor, what do you think—ah,—I'm so glad.—(*Goes to door R. Aside to FRANK.*) Hurry! (*Goes c., opening and shutting door four or five times, saying, "Good-bye" each time. Down c.*) All right, girls, the coast is clear.

(ALICE and DORA *enter L., looking cautiously about.*)

ALICE (*rapidly*). Oh, my, have they all gone? Is the house quarantined? Do we have to stay here?

DORA (*rapidly*). Can Frank come out now? Was it really smallpox?

DICK. Yes, Frank will be out directly, and I am happy to say that the poor old lady didn't have smallpox but only a bad case of measles.

ALICE. Is she still here?

DICK. Oh, no, they carried her out —

(*Enter FRANK R., in male attire, minus the lather on face.*)

FRANK. On a stretcher.

ALICE. I'm so glad.

DORA. Oh, Frank, I was so shaky.

(FRANK and DORA *down c.*)

FRANK. What about, the smallpox, or the board of health?

DORA. I don't know. I was wondering if I would be able to see you before we went to the country for the week end.

(DICK and ALICE *have been conversing up stage near window.*)

ALICE (*coming down*). It is getting late, my dear, and we have quite some shopping to do before train time, so perhaps we had better trip along.

FRANK. If you will drop in again on your way to the station, and we are fortunate enough to have a lull in business, we will be pleased to see you as far as your train.

ALICE. Thank you; we will surely be back later.

DORA. When, I hope, your time will not be taken with one-legged colored ladies. [ALICE and DORA *exeunt* c.]

DICK. For the love of mud hurry yourself into that costume.

FRANK. I can't manage it alone.

DICK. I'll give you a lift. (*They both start R. Bell rings.*) Drat that bell. (*Goes to tube.*) Hello—Yes, this is Richard Tate, Esq.—Oh yes, to be sure—(*To FRANK.*) Go get dressed. (*In tube.*) I beg your pardon, I said you know the address—Yes, madam, come right up.

FRANK. Who, who is it? Not Uncle?

DICK. Never mind who, get dressed. It isn't Unck, but it soon will be. Hurry now! Hurry!! (*Pushes FRANK off R.*) You'll have to dress the best you can. If there is anything at all difficult call me.

(*Goes to table L.*)

(*Enter c., MRS. SARAH ANN MULLEN, carrying a parasol and small hand-bag. She is decidedly a country lady, but not extremely ridiculous. She speaks rather loudly and slowly.*)

MRS. M. Ah! How-da-do! Mr. Tate, I presume; yes, yes, of course it is Mr. Tate. How could it be anything else when it is on the card outside the door and wasn't I jest speaking to ye through that 'ere pipe.

DICK (*indicating chair R.*). Pray be seated, Mrs.—

MRS. M. Mullen, Mrs. Sarah Ann Mullen of Happy Valley Junction. (*Sitting in chair R., and looking around.*) Now I believe in getting right to the point, so I wunt waste any words, so's to speak; but will begin by

saying that I need the advice of a lawyer and maybe a detective, but that is really more than I can say at present.

DICK. At your service, my dear lady.

MRS. M. Well, to begin; several years ago I was fool enough to get married to one of them worthless skunks called men. I beg yer pardon but ——

DICK. Not at all, I've been called worse names.

MRS. M. I'm referring to this no-account man I hitched myself to some twenty years ago. I was warned ag'in him but I guess they're nearly right when they say love is blind. It surely is, deaf, dumb and blind; but as I say, I'm a woman of few words and to come to the point, my husband left me when we had been married only a few months.

DICK. But haven't you allowed this to run quite a length of time ——

MRS. M. Oh, I didn't mourn long; it wuz only a very short time before I discovered that I wuz better off without him. When he left a young lady accompanied him but I bear no malice ag'in her; in truth I am sorry for her. But I guess it didn't take her long to find him out, from what I could gather at the time. Now you understand I'm a woman of few words and believe in coming to the point directly, as I wuz about to say ——

DICK. Yes ——

MRS. M. About to say, when he left me he took my private papers and sich; among which, wuz one hundred shares of mining stock which wuz regarded as worthless at that time, but only yesterday, while here in town, I learned that they had become worth quite a sum.

DICK. And do you suppose that they are now in the possession of this person you mention?

MRS. M. That is something I want to find out.

DICK. And where is this ——

MRS. M. He's another thing I want to find.

DICK. Do I understand that you have not seen or heard of him for over twenty years?

MRS. M. Not a word ——

DICK. Madam, of course you realize that ——
(FRANK, at door R., beckons DICK frantically. DICK,

resuming.) Ah yes, pardon me a moment, my dear lady, but my cat is in the other room and I am afraid he is eating the canary. (*Starts R.*)

MRS. M. Certainly, but you should never leave a cat and —— (*DICK exits R.*) Humph! Now that's a queer combination; cat, lawyer and a canary. But then you do run up ag'in some queer articles here in the city. (*Looking around room.*) This don't seem to be a very prosperous looking establishment, but then, he seems all right and probably needs the work and I've heard tell that you can get these young lawyers a good deal cheaper. This room is certainly in an awful mess; if I had my way here, I wouldn't have sich a helter-skelter. But what can a person expect of people that have lived and been brought up in the city where everything is a shove here, and a push there; and nobody seems to have time enough to know their next door neighbor. I wish I wuz back in Happy Valley right now; I can't for the life of me remember whether I left Tom locked in the house or not, but then I don't suppose he will starve with nine lives to live and only four days to use 'em up in. I'm glad I didn't have to leave a man in the —— (*Enter DICK R.*) Mr. Tate, are you a married man?

DICK (*eyeing her*). No, ah no; far from it.

MRS. M. (*looking around*). I thought so.

DICK. I presume, madam, that you want to locate this party and lay claim to your property, which of course will be an uncertain procedure, as twenty years is quite a period of time.

MRS. M. That is what I have been trying to say.

DICK (*at table L., writing*). Could you give me a description of ——

MRS. M. Oh yes, he wuz a man of more than medium height, dark hair and had a very mean look in his face.

DICK. And his age would now be?

MRS. M. About fifty odd, I should say.

DICK. And his name?

MRS. M. Henry Thaddeus Mullen.

DICK. Has he any near relatives?

MRS. M. I don't know of any.

DICK. I cannot promise you any real success, but there is a fair chance, yes, quite a fair chance of recovering your property; mind, I say only a fair chance. Our regular fee in such matters is anywhere from ten to one hundred dollars, in advance, you know, sort of a retainer. In this case, say we make it—well—say fifteen dollars.

MRS. M. (*rising, and handing him money from bag*). Now I can rely on you to try and locate this critter, can't I? (*Goes up c.*)

DICK. To be sure, madam. Here's your parasol.

MRS. M. Thank you. Good-bye.

DICK. Good-day. [*Exit MRS. MULLEN.*]

(*DICK dances around kissing bills. Enter FRANK R. dressed as girl and wearing a lady's wig.*)

FRANK. Well! What's up?

DICK. Our capital. Gone up from thirty-nine cents to fifteen thirty-nine.

FRANK. Hurrah!

(*They join hands and dance c. Enter MRS. MULLEN c., who stands horrified, hands in air.*)

MRS. M. Young man! (*They stop dancing, DICK L., FRANK R. MRS. MULLEN at c.*) Young man, I suppose you will tell me that this young lady is your sister. I think I will withdraw my case and the fifteen dollars.

DICK. Ah, just one moment. I can readily perceive your consternation over our little scene, but ——

MRS. M. You said you were unmarried. Now pray tell me who this creature is?

FRANK. Why, I'm his ——

DICK. Hold on. Let me explain. This is the one and only Francis Felton, the wonder of his age; the shrewdest detective of this country. Allow me (*Taking off FRANK's wig.*) to make you acquainted. Frank, this is the charming Mrs. Sarah Ann Mullen of Happy Valley Junction.

(*MRS. MULLEN bows stiffly. FRANK bows.*)

MRS. M. May be, but do you usually hold such capers here; such as I jest witnessed?

DICK. Oh yes, you see he is in one of his many disguises and I was helping him to rehearse, as he is to impersonate a young lady of cabaret fame this evening.

MRS. M. I see; that is different. I hope you will overlook my shocked manner but it did seem queer actions for a smart upright young lawyer (DICK *swells*.) to be having. I came back to ask when I would hear from you.

DICK. Would it be too much trouble for you to call later, when I have had time to consider the matter more fully?

MRS. M. No, I'm in town until to-morrow, and have plenty of leisure; by the way, you never mentioned your friend the detective before. Couldn't he be of help to us in locating this critter of mine?

FRANK. To be sure, madam, it would be a pleasure, I assure you. I will gladly do what I can for you for —

DICK. But my dear lady, his services are rather expensive.

FRANK. Not at all in this case. I think I would like to give my services to this lady for the experience of the case whatever it might be.

MRS. M. Thank you. Mr. Tate will inform you of the matter. Good-day. [Exit MRS. MULLEN, c.]

FRANK. } Good-day.
DICK. }

FRANK (*coming c.*). Well, give me the once over, and tell me how I look. (*Turning around slowly.*)

DICK. Capital! Philander will go into raptures the moment he lays his eyes on you.

FRANK. I presume you have thought of further plans for my coming engagement, that is, more fully than last I heard.

DICK. Well, no; I can't say I have had much time, but you will only have to follow the natural course of events and be very loving to both Unck and your suitor. The rest will come very easy, just do as I instruct; take it easy; you have nothing to worry over.

(Lays wig on table L.)

FRANK. Nothing to worry over? Well, now, I like that.

DICK. I have an appointment that will take me away for a few minutes, but will soon be back. It would be a fine idea to sort of straighten this room before dear Uncle arrives.

FRANK. Rather strange that you should happen to think of clearing this room just previous to your appointment.

DICK. Keep cool; I will be gone only a few minutes and bear in mind that I am in this venture quite heavily myself, and you can rest assured I'll stand behind you in whatever happens. You can rely——

(Knock on door. DICK and FRANK exchange glances. DICK jumps under table.)

FRANK. That's right *(Knock.)*—stand behind me.

(FRANK goes to door and returns with florist's box.)

DICK *(coming from under table)*. I thought it was that woman again.

FRANK *(sarcastically)*. And you were afraid she would force another fee on you?

DICK. Now, I wonder who that box is from and what it might contain.

FRANK *(undoing box)*. Well, it might contain a pair of suspenders; a few sticks of dynamite or—*(Opening box.)* Sweet pickles!

DICK. No!!

FRANK. Well now, look at that. *(Exhibits flowers. Reads note.)* “To my darling Frances; from your Philander.”

DICK. We must arrange them very artistically where they will meet his gaze when first he arrives.

FRANK. Bright idea, but what shall we put them in?

DICK. That's right, we haven't a thing. Nothing but a cup with a broken handle.

FRANK *(picking up coffee-pot)*. Here we are, the very thing. *(Places coffee-pot on table L. He tries to*

place flowers in it, but stems are too long. Reaches for pocket.) Here, cut the stems off. (*DICK cuts stems off with knife from table. FRANK arranges flowers. DICK ties ribbon from flowers around.*) There, that looks as if a feminine hand had been at work here.

DICK. Now, my charming Miss Frances, I must beg to take leave of your delightful society as I have a very pressing engagement. (*Business of being busy.*)

[*Exit DICK, c.*

FRANK. I wonder what this Philander fellow will be like? It seems a shame to deceive him; undoubtedly some young fellow in straitened circumstances, as I am myself. I'm sure to be found out, and then there will be a terrible pow-pow. (*Looking at clock on desk.*) By Jove, it's getting near the appointed time and I must get this room in order. There doesn't seem to be much the matter with it, but I suppose a girl would have it somewhat neater. (*Starts to pick up room; puts shoes on table L., carries smoking utensils from table to desk. Brings hat from desk to table, carries neckties from table to chair, and brings socks from chair to table.*) Dick won't know the place, after my feminine touch. I surely think those flowers look like — (*Knock on door.*) Holy horrors! I've lost my wig.

(*At c. Looks toward c. door, starts for c. Stops. Starts L. Knock on door. Starts R. Knock on door. Stops in confusion, starts L. and seeing wig on table grabs it and rushes off R.*)

(*Enter DORA c., just in time to see him vanish through door R.*)

DORA (*gazing after FRANK*). Now, who was that? I'm sure that one had two sound legs and by the way she ran I should judge she was under ninety. (*Coming down.*) I cannot understand all this mystery. Her garments resembled those Dick had on his arm. Well, two is company and three's a regiment. (*Starts up c. Stops.*) No, I'll play this out as if I knew nothing of this—this "Aged colored lady." Alice said she would

meet me here; evidently she has been detained as usual. (*Seats herself near table L., reaches for magazine, sees flowers in coffee-pot. Reading card attached to ribbon.*) "To my darling Frances——" Oh! The wretch—the—oh—oh—— (*Sobs, head on table.*)

(*Enter UNCLE and PHILANDER very briskly at c.*)

UNCLE (*coming down*). Ah, here we are at last. Not a very—— (*Approaching DORA.*) And here is my little niece waiting for—What! Why, my dear, you're not crying, are you? I hope we have not disappointed you by being a trifle late; but you see——

DORA (*looking up*). What do you mean, sir? I'm not your niece. I don't know you, and what is more I——

UNCLE (*patting her on shoulder*). Tut! Tut! My dear, calm yourself. Permit me to explain. I am your Uncle Simon and this young gentleman is——

DORA (*drawing away*). Another prominent actor in this farce that is taking place here. I suppose he is a brother to the colored lady.

UNCLE. But, my dear, you received my letter, I hope——

DORA (*getting up*). Letter? I have received no letter from you, and what is more, I wish you to understand that I am not your dear.

UNCLE (*to PHILANDER*). There is a slight mistake here, I'm sure; pray be patient.

PHIL. Have no fear; I'm sure a man of your understanding and ability can straighten everything; I have always put the utmost faith in your sound judgment and it is not for me to change my mind regarding your masterly way of handling all difficult situations at this late hour.

UNCLE. So you have not received my letter; that explains everything.

DORA. I am glad you think so.

UNCLE. Just a moment. I am your Uncle Simon whom you have never seen and this young man is your future husband.

DORA (*jumping up*). My future husband! You, my uncle! You are crazy, both of you. Have you any idea where you are, and to whom you are talking?

PHIL. Perhaps we have made a mistake ——

UNCLE. Mistake! Mistake!! I guess not; isn't this Frances Felton's establishment? Of course it is! Did you ever know me to make a mistake, Filmore ——?

PHIL. No, I cannot say that ——

UNCLE. Don't interrupt! Now is this or is it not the residence of Frances Felton?

DORA. It is.

UNCLE. And you are?

DORA (*flouncing out c.*). None of your business.

UNCLE (*following her to c. and looking off*). What! What! None of my business, eh! Philander, I have never in all my born days had anyone ever tell me to mind my own business before to-day, and to think that the first time should be by a young lady. Young lady, bah! If I had known that all my hopes were going to materialize thus, I would have ——

PHIL. Allow me to suggest that possibly ——

UNCLE. Shut up!!

PHIL. Yes, sir.

UNCLE. Well, what are we going to do about it? Answer me! Why don't you suggest something?

PHIL. I beg your pardon, but could I not mention in a humble way, in a humble way, you understand; that possibly ——

UNCLE. Mind your own business.

PHIL (*aside*). Minding your own business seems to be the chief occupation around here.

UNCLE. Well, we're here and if that was my niece we will jolly soon be somewhere else; let me tell you that.

PHIL. I quite agree with you. When it comes to an important decision, your judgment is second to none.

UNCLE. Ah, I see your senses have not entirely left you. Now what do you think of this reception, young man?

PHIL. As you very well know, I leave everything to

your superior judgment in this case; but just as a suggestion, wouldn't it be a wise plan to rather look the ground over? Perhaps the young lady of the fiery temper was not your niece after all, and then again, you—no—I mean, we might possibly have made a mistake in the address.

UNCLE. Mistake! I, make a mistake? I guess you forget to whom you are talking. I, make a mistake! Why, I know without a doubt that this is my niece's home. I can recognize it in an instant; not that I have any knowledge of what her ideas are but I can see by the family trait of constant cultivation of good taste.

PHIL. Surely, surely.

UNCLE (*looking around*). Not that this room is furnished with anything remarkably expensive but you will note, it shows careful study. Now, (*Sees flowers.*) now, just note how artistically those posies are arranged in—in —

PHIL. That percolator!

UNCLE. Percolator?

PHIL. (*taking flowers out of coffee-pot*). Yes, percolator!

UNCLE (*picking up coffee-pot*). Percolator, nothing! It's a coffee-pot.

(FRANK enters R., *whistling.*)

PHIL. What next?

FRANK (*seeing UNCLE and PHILANDER. Aside.*) Good-night! (UNCLE and PHILANDER turning, notice FRANK. *Aside.*) Now for it. (*Advances to meet UNCLE.*) My dear, dear Uncle.

(*They embrace c., UNCLE still holding coffee-pot.*

PHILANDER L., *holding flowers.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*The same as in ACT I. 'Afternoon of the same day. The stage is set as in ACT I. Properties, as at the close of the preceding act.*

(The curtain discloses FRANK seated in UNCLE'S lap, in chair R.)

UNCLE. So you have no objections to my choice of a husband.

FRANK. I think he is the darlindest duck of a man I ever knew.

UNCLE. Ah, you don't know how glad I am to hear you say that; I had some fear that ——

FRANK. Fear! Why, you old goose, Uncle. He is my ideal of a perfect man.

UNCLE. I'm glad to hear it, very glad indeed. And I am sure, from what Philander tells me, that he is carried away with you.

FRANK. Oh, you must not say that, it makes me blush. Am I getting heavy?

UNCLE. Heavy! Well, I should say not; I could hold you like this for hours.

FRANK. Don't you think this would be a nice place for a wedding, Uncle?

UNCLE. Why, you see I have planned to have the wedding at Happy Valley Junction, where I have just leased a cottage for the remainder of the season.

FRANK. But I would much rather have my wedding here.

UNCLE (*speaking louder*). And I say we will have it at Happy Valley Junction.

FRANK. And why not here?

UNCLE. Do you mean to tell me that you prefer to be married here in this room among all these ungodly thing-a-ma-bobs?

FRANK. Thing-a-ma-bobs!

UNCLE. Yes, thing-a-ma-bobs; or whatever you call 'em. Here for instance we find Philander's flowers in a—a coffee-pot.

FRANK (*jumping up*). Is this what you mean? Why, this isn't a coffee-pot; this is a very rare pitcher from Peru. It is priceless.

UNCLE. Is—that so? I'll have to tell Philander how he was mistaken. Now, I wasn't fooled; you see I'm never mistaken. (*Getting up.*) But don't you think you would much rather be married at Happy Valley?

FRANK. I'll have to ask Dick, first.

UNCLE. Dick! Dick! What do you mean, Dick? Who is Dick?

FRANK. Dick is—er—he is my lawyer.

UNCLE. Your lawyer! (*Picks up stocking from table L.*) Pray tell me, does this attractive table-cloth belong to Dick?

FRANK. That belongs to Mr. Tate.

UNCLE. Oh! So Mr. Tate sheds his stockings here in your room, does he? (*Confronting FRANK.*) Who is Mr. Tate?

FRANK. He is Dick; that is—no—Dick is Mr.—No! No! Mr. Tate is my servant.

UNCLE. Your servant, eh! Your servant!!!

FRANK. Yes, my servant.

UNCLE (*turning and going R.*). Not a very selective spot for a servant to air his socks, I must say. (*Sees neckties and collars in chair R.*) Look here; does this fellow work here or does he use this place for a gymnasium? I presume, just at present he happens to be taking his daily exercise and I suppose he will call shortly to restore his much refreshed body to his belongings with which he has so artistically decorated this room.

FRANK. You see he is such a fine servant that I refrain from saying anything that would cause him to feel hurt.

UNCLE. Feel hurt! He'll feel hurt if I find any more of his tracks around here. (*Sees shoes on table L.*) I see he does not hesitate to leave his shoes —

FRANK. But those are my shoes, Uncle.

UNCLE. Yours! I suppose you'll tell me that you wear one at a time, so you can walk in these new style skirts.

FRANK. Not quite as bad as that, but a few weeks back I was troubled with corns.

UNCLE. I don't doubt it if you wore those.

FRANK. I thought they would relieve my feet.

UNCLE. Well, they haven't relieved my mind any. Where is this servant? Call him in here and I'll discharge him. Why do you have a man instead of a woman for a servant?

FRANK. It is impossible to get a reliable maid, and you see Dick—that is—er—this servant of mine was with our family when I was a child and I could not think of letting him go.

UNCLE. Couldn't think of it, eh! We'll see! We'll see!! Wait till I——

(Enter DICK c., walking briskly.)

FRANK. Here he is now.

UNCLE *(down c.)*. Come here, young man. Now what do you mean by using this place for a laundry where you can air your personal belongings and——?

DICK. Just a moment, sir——

UNCLE. Silence! Here you have a good position, and you abuse it by using the furniture here, as a clothes-line. Now I——

DICK. And who has a better right? Do you happen to know to whom you are talking?

UNCLE. Do I know! Do I know to whom I——!!! G-r-r-r-r—— You're fired! Do you hear? Fired!

FRANK *(running to UNCLE)*. No, no, Uncle; not that! You see, I couldn't think of it, and besides I need him very much right now, you know. With my wedding and everything. You don't know what a manager he is.

DICK. No, I couldn't think of——

UNCLE *(to DICK)*. Shut up! Well, we won't discharge him right now, but it would be a good idea for

you to mend your ways, young man. And you may begin by clearing this room; and remember I'm the boss here, now.

DICK (*meekly*). Yes, sir.

FRANK. Wouldn't you like to take a nap? You will find a couch in the next room. (*Points L.*)

UNCLE. To tell the truth, I do feel rather tuckered after this servant ordeal. Well, call me if you need any help in the household problems. [*Exit UNCLE, L.*]

DICK (*confronting FRANK*). Well! What is the big idea, here?

FRANK. You are my servant.

DICK. Servant! Look here! Did I tell you anything about this —

FRANK. No, but Uncle wanted —

DICK. Hang Uncle! I'm the boss of this business and I don't remember casting myself as the servant.

FRANK. It was the only way out, and you had not shown yourself; so I had to do something. Now if you have any further orders, let me know, as I would like to —

UNCLE (*off L.*). Francis! Oh, Francis! (*DICK exits R., hurriedly. UNCLE enters L.*) There's something puzzling me; when I first arrived I made the mistake of addressing another young lady, thinking it was you.

FRANK. Another young lady—that is strange. What did she look like?

UNCLE. Well, she was fairly good looking, quite tall and had quite a fiery temper.

FRANK. Oh! Ha! Ha! Excuse me, Uncle, but it's quite a joke.

Uncle. I can assure you it was no joke.

FRANK. Why, Uncle, that was Dick's wife.

UNCLE. Dick's wife?

FRANK. Yes, my servant's wife.

UNCLE. Oh! Is that the whole of his family or will I find four or five young Dicks around here?

FRANK. Nothing like that, Uncle.

UNCLE. Let us hope not.

[*Exits L.*]

FRANK. Now I wonder who Uncle could have meant.

Oh, well, why should I bother about that? I had better consult Dick for further instructions. (*Starts R.*)

(*Enter PHILANDER C., with box.*)

PHIL. Ah, how fortunate I am to arrive at this opportune time. I hope you are not in a hurry.

FRANK. No, that is, I was just going to give my man some instructions.

PHIL. Your man!

FRANK. Yes, my servant.

PHIL. Oh yes, your servant, to be sure.

FRANK (*sitting in chair, R.*). But it doesn't matter. Do you know, I've been wondering what your impression of Uncle is?

PHIL. (*placing chair close to FRANCIS*). I think your uncle is the cleverest, smartest and brightest person I know, with one exception —

FRANK (*coolly*). With one exception! And who may that be, pray?

PHIL. What if a little bird should tell you that I thought his niece was the only one excepted?

FRANK. You're flattering now.

PHIL. Not a bit, I assure you. By the way, here is a little remembrance I purchased for you.

(*Hands FRANK box of candy.*)

FRANK. Thank you; you are very thoughtful, I am sure. Will you always be as thoughtful toward me, that is, after we are married?

PHIL. If I could only say in words the thoughts that come to me; ah, but it is beyond one so humble as I — (*Places arm around FRANK and looks cautiously about.*) Would it be out of the way, if I should take the liberty to —?

FRANK. What if some one should come?

PHIL. Oh, there is no danger.

(*DICK enters R. unobserved, and watches with much silent laughter from up stage.*)

FRANK. Are you sure?

PHIL. (*anticipating*). Surely; it's perfectly all right; we're engaged, you know.

(PHILANDER *leans toward* FRANK, *about to kiss him*.)

DICK *sneezes*. FRANK and PHILANDER *jump up*.)

DICK (*coming down*). I beg your pardon, but which bag shall I pack?

FRANK. The black one will do.

PHIL. I believe I will take a walk. That is, if you have no objections.

FRANK. Not in the least; take care of yourself.

PHIL. Surely—Good-bye. [*Exit* PHIL., c.]

FRANK. You saved the day.

DICK. What; by sneezing? That was an accident. I was waiting for him to kiss you.

FRANK. Accident or not, do you realize that if he had kissed me, he would have noticed my beard? That is one thing we must guard against. It is a wonder that he has not seen through this disguise before now. I have no fear of Uncle with his poor eyesight, but this other gink is likely to get wise.

DICK. Don't worry, love is blind; but it is not love for the fair Francis that is blinding that bird; it's his love for that million.

FRANK. I guess you are right, there. Do you know the latest development? I'm to be married at Happy Valley Junction.

DICK. At Happy Valley Junction! Where have I heard that name before? By Jove, the fifteen dollar lady, Mrs. Sarah Ann Mullen. Say, that won't be so bad; perhaps we can combine business with pleasure.

FRANK. Holy mackerel! Where does the pleasure come in? Tell me, is my skirt too long?

(FRANK *walks c. and turns*.)

DICK. No, but that is one thing you must get rid of.

FRANK. What, my skirt?

DICK. No, that holy mackerel business, and the rest

of your slang; don't let Unck hear it. By the way, when do we start for Happy Valley Junction?

FRANK. Uncle said there was a train at four-thirty; that reminds me, I must pack.

DICK. Pack! What will you pack?

FRANK. You're right, what can I pack? I'll have to carry the bag anyway. I must hunt it up. See you later.
[Exit R.]

DICK (*places PHILANDER'S chair back L., and leans against table during following speech*). It looks as if Uncle was rushing this thing right along. I don't seem to be the general here at all. Now if I could only have a little time to think this thing out. I can't see any way clear at present; but we must have that million.

(Enter ALICE, C.)

ALICE. Hello, Sir Richard; has Dora called here for me?

DICK. I haven't seen her.

ALICE. She said she would meet me here; but there, she always is hours late. I hope she gets here in time for us to catch our train; it leaves at four-thirty.

DICK. Let me see, you are going down to Chadwick, are you not?

ALICE. Oh no, we're going to my aunt's at Happy Valley Junction.

DICK. Happy Valley Junction!

ALICE. Yes, Happy Valley Junction.

DICK. Did you say your train left at four-thirty?

ALICE. Yes, four-thirty; why?

DICK. Oh, nothing. (*Sinks in chair R.*)

ALICE. Dick! What is the matter?

DICK. Alice, you mustn't take that train; it's going to be wrecked. I heard that the engineer of that train drinks moonshine, and isn't reliable. No, you mustn't go to Happy Valley Junction on that train. In fact, there isn't any train at four-thirty.

ALICE. No train at four-thirty?

DICK. No, there is no train any time to Happy Val-

ley Junction. They have discontinued them. The tracks have been torn up.

ALICE. Tracks torn up!

DICK. Yes, I read it.

ALICE. Where?

DICK. I don't know, somewhere—in something.

(UNCLE enters from L., listens from up stage.)

ALICE (*bending over* DICK). Dick, are you in your right mind or are you getting stage struck? There seems to be a number of extraordinary scenes taking place here to-day — (*Pauses.*) Answer me now; what do you mean by talking about moonshine and wrecks and —?

UNCLE (*coming down*). Here! Here! (DICK *jumps up*. UNCLE *grabs* DICK.) This thing has gone about far enough. I think it's up to me to show you your proper place and take you down a peg or two. What do you mean by flirting here with this young lady; and you a married man, sir. A married man! Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

DICK. Let me —

UNCLE. Silence!

ALICE. Married man! Who said so?

UNCLE. Frances said so, and I was talking to his wife when I first arrived. He must have been abusing her then, as I found her in tears. (*To* DICK.) Oh, you're a sly one, I'll —

DICK. This is a mis —

UNCLE. I presume she is a miss; I should hope you didn't happen to marry more than one at a time.

ALICE. So; I begin to see who the one-legged colored lady was, and the clothes you had on your arm. There, take your old ring. (*Throws ring at* DICK.)

[*Exit* ALICE, c.

DICK (*follows her off c. calling*). Alice—just a moment—please, Alice —

(*Followed by* UNCLE *who has him by the coat-tail.*)

(*Enter* FRANK R.)

FRANK. I thought I heard voices, but there seems to be no one here. I wonder if Uncle has awakened from his nap. I hope that — (*Enter UNCLE C.*) Ah, here you are; you did not take a very long nap.

UNCLE. Nap! I would like to get that servant of yours by the "nap" of his neck.

FRANK. I hope he hasn't been pestering you.

UNCLE. Did I understand you to say that he was a married man?

FRANK. Why, I believe I said he had a wife.

UNCLE. You believe you said so: Don't you know?

FRANK. Of course he is married and has a very delightful wife of whom he is very fond.

UNCLE. Very fond of her; yes, I should say he was very fond of a number of them.

FRANK. Why, what do you mean?

UNCLE. Mean! I just found him making love to another young lady right here in this room.

FRANK. Are you sure it was not his wife? As I said, he is very fond —

UNCLE. Wife, fiddlesticks! I came into this room and there they were, both in that chair; and upon my taking him to task for it the young lady was very much surprised to learn that he had a wife, and threw her engagement ring at him and went out in tears. He's a regular Mormon. You must get rid of him at once.

FRANK. But I couldn't discharge him right off suddenly, as he is quite reliable in many ways. Perhaps it was his sister; she comes here quite often, and now that I come to think of it he has kept his marriage a secret from her.

UNCLE. Sister! My dear Frances, you ought to be well aware that young men do not give rings to their own sisters, and I guess this isn't his only escapade. I heard the young lady mention something about a one-legged colored lady with her clothes on her arm.

FRANK. Oh, ho! A one-legged colored lady, eh?

UNCLE. Do you know who she is?

FRANK. No, I have never heard of her.

UNCLE. Oh, I thought perhaps you would say it was

another sister. But that is neither here nor there; you simply must tell that scoundrel that you are through with him.

FRANK (*approaching* UNCLE). Uncle, I would do anything for you, and as much as I dislike to mention it, I will tell him that his services are not wanted after this week.

UNCLE. Well, if you can't see your way clear to bounce him right now, I suppose I'll have to submit to his actions for a week longer.

FRANK. Uncle, you're a peach (*Aside.*) of a prune. (*Aloud.*) I will run right along and tell him. [*Exit c.*]

UNCLE. I guess you'll have to run some to catch him, if he is still going at the same speed. (*Sits R.*) Now, she's not such an unruly girl as I thought she would be, considering who her mother was. She must take after her father. I only hope this marriage will be a success; I haven't told them anything about the cottage I have furnished for them. I wonder if they will have any objections to my living with them. Of course not. It isn't as if I were a cranky old individual always poking around finding fault with the servants and meddling in general. How this coming event recalls to my mind, as if it were only yesterday, over twenty years ago, when I was a happy married man and now—I wonder where she is?

(*Enter* MRS. MULLEN *c.*, *carrying letter.*)

MRS. M. Oh, excuse me, but could you tell me whether Mr. Tate is in or not?

UNCLE (*rising*). No, ma'am; I cannot say that I know the gentleman.

MRS. M. Perhaps you might inform me, then, where I would find Mr. Felton.

UNCLE. Right here, madam; I am Mr. Felton.

MRS. M. You! Oh, I see; how clever of you. I suppose this is one of your many disguises.—You see I wasn't —

UNCLE. Are you sure that you haven't —

MRS. M. As I was saying, I wasn't quite sure that it could be you; but of course it is—and —

UNCLE. I think there is ——

MRS. M. And I wanted to say that if you would try and find that rascal of a husband of mine, I would be greatly relieved, and if your friend Mr. Tate ——

UNCLE. My friend Mr. TATE!! Look here! Don't connect my ——

MRS. M. Don't interrupt me. As I was about to say, being a woman of few words, and having only a few minutes before my train leaves for Happy Valley, I wish you would tell Mr. Tate that as I did not happen to see him, he can write to me for further information. I will leave my address here on the table. (*Lays envelope on table L.*) Good-day, sir.

UNCLE. Just a moment, I —— (*Exit MRS. MULLEN c.*) That is strange; she said Happy Valley. What sort of a place is this; a lunatic asylum? By George!! She certainly had 'em all right. That was queer; she called me by name and thought I was in disguise. Looking for her rascal of a husband, eh! I pity the poor fellow if she ever finds him. What a tongue that woman—Ye Gods!! I'll wager that was wife number two of that servant. I'm going to give that fellow a piece of my mind right off the handle. (*Starts to go c., pauses in door.*) Here he comes now in the lower hall, and his wife is with him. (*Comes down.*) I wonder if it wouldn't be wise to wait. [*Exit L.*]

(*Enter DICK and DORA c., talking as they enter.*)

DICK. But, Dora, it is all a mistake.

DORA. Mistake! I should say so, with that horrid old man running in here and calling me his dear niece, and ——

DICK. Why, that is easily explained: He is Frank's uncle, but I'll admit he is rather off his base.

DORA. I should say as much. Did you say he was Frank's uncle? It's strange Frank has never mentioned him to me; but then, there seem to be a number of things of late that he has neglected to mention.

DICK. 'So?

DORA. And what is more I think you can enlighten me, if you felt so disposed, in regard to most of these queer actions taking place here.

DICK. Queer actions! What do you mean? Everything is all O. K. here, so far as I know.

DORA. Very well, keep up your sham of innocence if it pleases you, but it is rather strange that Frank is always out or being detained by lady visitors or ——

DICK. Why, you don't blame Frank for being kind hearted to that colored lady, do you?

DORA. Colored lady! Did you think I swallowed the whole of that fish story of yours?

DICK. But ——

DORA. Because if you did you are very much mistaken. Now are you going to explain all these mysterious actions here, or are you not?

DICK. I don't really know what ——

DORA. Dick, don't stand there and lie to me. I am beginning to believe ——

DICK. Allow me to say ——

DORA. I'll allow nothing; this farce has gone far enough. (*Enter UNCLE L., unobserved.*) You are either going to tell me the whole truth in this matter or I will find out for myself; so there now.

DICK. Calm yourself, Dora, everything is all right.

UNCLE (*coming down*). Everything is not all right.

DORA. You!

UNCLE. Yes, I. And if I am not mistaken, this is the young lady that I mistook for my niece; for which I beg your pardon, as I see it was a mistake on the part of, of, well, of Philander.

DICK. Look here, old ——

UNCLE. You shut up! I beg your pardon, lady, but this man needs strong words. I just overheard him saying that everything was all right. Now I know better and so does he. Now, young man, you tell her to her face about all these other women you have had trooping in here after you.

DICK. Women!

DORA. Oh!

(*Throws herself in chair L., head on table.*)

UNCLE. Yes, women; and it is up to you to tell the truth or I will, and I won't omit anything either. This thing has gone far enough. Aren't you ashamed to look this woman in the face after the actions that have been going on here? Answer me!

DICK. I'm sure you are ——

UNCLE. Silence, when I'm through you may speak, not before. Now get down on your knees and beg her pardon.

DICK. But ——

UNCLE. Down, before I explode. (DICK, *getting slowly down.*) Say you are sorry.

DICK. What ——

UNCLE. Say it!

(FRANK *enters C., unobserved.*)

DICK. I'm sorry.

(DORA *looking up at* UNCLE.)

UNCLE. Now kiss her.

FRANK (*rushing down*). Stop! Don't you dare.

UNCLE. What do you mean?

FRANK. What do you mean by making him kiss her?

UNCLE. I am compelling him to explain his capers to his wife.

DICK. My wife!

FRANK. Holy mackerel!

DORA (*astounded*). Frank! (*Starts to get up.*)

(DICK *holds her down.*)

FRANK. Why, they are the most devoted couple you ever saw. Why, I would no sooner ——

UNCLE. Umph—Maybe; but I wash my hands of the whole affair; you can just make your plans to get rid of that servant right away; that's all I have to say. [*Exit R.*]

FRANK. Good-night!

DORA (*getting up*). Frank, perhaps you can explain why that crazy old lunatic is running around here; but tell me first what this female garb is for.

FRANK. Why, that is very easily done. You see, I received a letter —

DICK. Let me tell her. Dora, Frank sent all of his trousers to the tailor's to —

FRANK. Hold on, you may be the manager of this firm but this is one instance where I'm not going to permit any more of your lies; which so far have done more harm than good.

DICK. Very well, but remember I'm not to blame for what follows.

DORA. I'm waiting.

FRANK. I won't blame you if you don't believe me, but here goes. My uncle thinks I'm a girl —

DORA. A girl!

FRANK. Yes, a girl, and he has declared me his heir to a million —

DORA. Ah!

FRANK. On condition that I marry one Mr. Philander Filmore.

DORA. But that is impossible.

FRANK. So it seems to me, but this gentleman here, Richard Tate, Esq., thinks he can manage it, so that I may come into the million without marrying this Philander and then—and then—well, you know.

(Warn Curtain)

DICK. Which will be done as described if this clumsy idiot makes no more mistakes.

DORA (*taking hold of FRANK's dress*). So this explains the costume Dick had; and also the one-legged lady, I suppose.

DICK. Correct, how clever!

DORA. I must go find Alice and tell her immediately.

FRANK. No, don't! Not a word to anyone.

DORA. Very well, I must admit that this story is more convincing than the other, but I can hardly, that is, I

would feel much more satisfied if you would remove that wig.

DICK. No, he mustn't —

DORA. Why not?

FRANK (*removing wig*). There is no danger.

DORA (*going to FRANK*). Oh, Frank, forgive me for thinking that you were —

(*Enter UNCLE R. and PHILANDER C.*)

DICK. Quick!

(*Jumps in front of PHILANDER first, and then UNCLE, and waves his arms jumping wildly about. Before FRANK can get the wig on, DORA has clapped the waste basket over his head. FRANK runs blindly about, but is blocked at R. by UNCLE, at C. by PHILANDER, and by DORA at L.*)

UNCLE. I say, are you all crazy?

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*Exterior of UNCLE'S newly acquired country home at Happy Valley Junction. Evening, three days later. Japanese lanterns, lighted and strung across stage. Stage lights dimmed just enough to give the proper tone. Wing showing front porch of house, R. Trees and shrubs winged at L. Back drop showing trees, shrubs and flowers; or any country landscape will do. Hedge across back of stage with entrance at C. Rustic pergola down L., extending off stage. Dog kennel up stage R. Broom leaning against pergola at L. Settle down R. Rustic table and bench in pergola. The pergola and the porch lattice may be used to support vines, roses, etc.*

(*Curtain discloses TIMOTHY HAYE, the gardener, on step-ladder C., fixing Japanese lanterns; CONSTABLE SILAS SICKELMOORE seated on settle R., whittling stick that he carries as a billy.*)

TIMOTHY. So ye think that feller is a crook, Si.

SILAS. Well, I wouldn't jest say he wuz, and I wouldn't jest say he wuzn't, either; but the old feller told me ter keep my eye on him.

TIM. You don't say!

SILAS. Look here, Timothy Haye, what do ye make out of all these air capers this crowd is cutting up, anyway?

TIM. (*coming down from ladder and looking around*). I hardly dare say, but if ye wuz ter ask me, I'd say the hull blamed bunch of 'em wuz plumb crazy.

SILAS. Who knows? Perhaps ye may be right. Do they act like crazy ones all the time?

TIM. (*approaching SILAS and speaking cautiously*). Of course this is only 'tween me and you, Silas; but it don't seem right; that there old scarecrow a-hitching up

with that there young gal and the old uncle a-standing off and a-edging 'em on. But it ain't fer me ter complain; yer see the old duffer seems ter have plenty of money and I'm ter work here jest the same as if Mister Walton wuz here hisself and hadn't let the hull place ter this crowd fer the rest of the summer.

SILAS. Then it's settled that they are goin' ter stay fer a while? Seen much of the gal, lately? Does she come out around here much?

TIM. Oh, occasionally, occasionally; likely ter look up any moment and see her and that old mossback of a Philander, roaming around here. They come up sometimes without airy a sound and like ter scare the day-lights out of me. Si, I don't dare sleep fer fear I'll wake up some morning and find my throat cut from —

(FRANK enters R., wearing a white apron and dusting cap.)

FRANK. Oh, Mister Haye, I wonder if you could tell me how to make an omelet?

TIM. Can't say as I ever made one, but —

FRANK. Uncle said he would like a tomato omelet; and I haven't the least idea how to make it.

TIM. Why don't you fry 'em some more eggs?

FRANK. He says if I serve him any more fried eggs, he will die of indigestion.

TIM. Why don't you boil 'em?

FRANK. Right you are! I never thought of that.

[Exit R., into house.]

SILAS. What's an omelet, anyway?

TIM. Don't know as I kin tell ye, never having made one; but should say it wuz something to eat. That's the way that gal has been running out here now fer the last three days. How do you cook this, or how do you fix that?

SILAS. Can't be much on the cooking, eh? What will her husband do after they're married, I wonder?

TIM. I suppose they're planning on getting enough of the old feller's money so they kin hire it done. Ye see, they always depended on that feller you're ter keep your

eye on fer the cooking end; and they no sooner got here than the old Uncle fired him right off the handle. Told him if he ever came back he would blow his brains all over the county.

SILAS. So!

TIM. Yep! He told him ter spend one day a week with each of his wives and see if it would make him any better natured.

SILAS. Do ye suppose he's got that many?

TIM. I dunno, it's hard telling, but you see he must of had some experience ter know how ter cook. And now they haven't any cook or anybody ter look after 'em a-tall. I think they would 'a' done better by keeping him a while. I expect any minute to hear 'em holler fer me to come in and make the beds.

(*Enter* UNCLE, R., *from house.*)

SILAS. Sh!—Here he is now.

UNCLE. I say, there; hey!

TIM. (*looking up*). That's my name.

UNCLE. Do you know where I can get a person that knows how to cook? One that would be willing to do good cooking, for good money?

TIM. Dunno as I do. Yer see, you've asked me that four or five times before.

UNCLE. Well, I'm likely to ask four or five times more, I guess, before it does any good. I'll starve before then, though. That niece of mine only knows how to cook one article. Eggs, eggs, eggs, all the time. Fried, fried, and fried. Now she has just discovered that they can be boiled. Bah! I'll turn into an egg. I don't dare look a hen in the face.

SILAS. Did you say you wuz looking fer a woman that could cook?

UNCLE (*discovering* SILAS). I believe I made some such remark. Do you know of any one?

SILAS. Well, I might know of a person and then ag'in I might not.

UNCLE. If you know of a woman that will come here and cook for me, go get her and I'll pay her anything

she asks, as long as it is reasonable; reasonable, do you hear?

SILAS. Be you want her jest ter cook, or do yer be thinking of marrying her?

UNCLE. Marrying her? No, I want to keep from starving. I don't want another one to feed.

SILAS. Well, I know of a woman down in the village that would be jest what ye want, but whether ye could get her or not is another thing.

UNCLE. Would you be so good as to ask her? that is, I suppose you are going along that way.

SILAS. Yes, going right along now. Do yer want her ter come right up?

UNCLE. Yes; tell her to hurry; I'm starving. (*Exit SILAS C., going off L.*) Everything ready, Timothy?

TIM. Seems ter be all fixed. I'll go down and get the wagons put away 'fore the minister comes, as he will prob'ly want a place ter hitch his hoss.

UNCLE. Ye gods! The minister? I wonder if anyone has thought about engaging a minister? They can't be married without one. That had quite escaped my mind. I'll ask Frances. [*Exit UNCLE, R.*]

TIM. I guess he's got 'em all right; be a joke on him if the minister wa'n't to hum, now wouldn't it?

(*Starts up C. Enter FRANK R.*)

FRANK. Just a moment. I wish you would take a message to the minister for me.

TIM. Now?

FRANK. Well, very soon.

TIM. All right; jest as soon as I harness the hoss.

(*TIMOTHY exits C., going off R., with step-ladder.*)

FRANK. I wonder where Dick is? He is rather shy since Uncle chased him off the place with that shotgun.

(*DICK pokes head out of dog kennel.*)

DICK. Frank, are you alone? (*FRANK looking for voice.*) Here I am, in here.

FRANK. Well, of all the —

DICK (*trying to crawl out*). Don't waste words. Help me out; I'm as stiff as a ramrod.

FRANK (*helping DICK out*). Come, Fido, come.

DICK. Jove! I thought I would never get a chance to get out of that sweat-box. There has been some one here for the last three hours.

FRANK (*laughing*). I'm sorry for you, but you did look comical.

DICK. That's it, laugh! Now tell me where is the message you have for the minister.

FRANK (*producing note*). Right here.

DICK. Give it to me. I'll deliver it to the parson as I go by.

FRANK (*handing DICK the note*). Fine! But you had better hurry before Uncle comes.

DICK. Don't worry, I'm off. See you later.

[*Hobbles off L.*]

FRANK. I wonder how Dick likes managing this enterprise.

(*Enter TIMOTHY C.*)

TIM. I'm ready ter take that air message to the minister's. Hoss all hitched and everything.

FRANK. Oh, yes! The note! To be sure, but there isn't any note—that is—I mean I gave it to Uncle to deliver.

TIM. All right. (*Aside.*) I guess they're all daffy.

[*Exit TIMOTHY R. C.*]

FRANK (*down stage*). It seems rather provoking to think that the girls are here in the village, and I cannot get away long enough to see them. It takes all my time attending to Uncle or Philander. (*Looking off L.*) Here he comes, now; I'll make myself scarce. [*Exit R.*]

(*PHILANDER enters L., bareheaded.*)

PHIL. (*looking about*). Ah, everything in readiness for the event of my life. I wonder where the old bird is? Counting his money I'll wager. Let him count it; I'll have my share of it very shortly. Ah, little he sus-

pects, but I have earned it all these years playing up to the rôle of humbleness and doing everything to please him. No doubt he will be greatly shocked to see the apple of his eye so suddenly decay; but it will surely happen, as soon as I accomplish my little scheme. What do I care for his pretty niece, when once I get my hands on that million. Of course, I'll have to marry her to get it; but what of that, a mere trifle. I'll soon get rid of her but not until I'm tired of her. She'll prove a novelty for a few months with that beautiful face of hers, and then—good-bye Uncle. Where's your million? (*Enter UNCLE R.*) Ah, I was just wondering where to look for you. I hope you are not thinking of going far; you should not go prowling about here after dark, you know. That vagabond of a servant you discharged might be looking for you. I hope you won't go very far from the house.

UNCLE. Don't be alarmed, Philander, I'm not as innocent as you are; they can't fool me. No one ever did yet.

PHIL. I quite agree with you; but I must be going. I'm on my way to the station to see if that package has arrived. Take care of yourself. Don't stay out in this night air too long at a time. [*Exit PHILANDER L.*]

UNCLE. Night air! The only thing that keeps me alive is this air. I wish that cook would hurry so she will have time enough to cook a little something before this wedding or the whole bunch of us will blow away before it's time. Frances seems to know very little about cooking, but I guess they will get over that obstacle with the money I'm going to give them. I do hope she will give Philander no cause to worry over other matters as he deserves the best of attention. Philander is certainly one of nature's noblemen; yes, sir, one of the finest.

(*Enter MRS. MULLEN L. C.*)

MRS. MULLEN (*coming down*). Howdy-doo; I am looking fer —— Land of mercy if it ain't Mr. Felton, the detective. What ever brought you ——

UNCLE. Just a ——

MRS. M. Well, well! Silas said as how it wuz a Mr. Felton but I didn't expect it wuz you. Well, have you found any new developments?

UNCLE (*aside*). That crazy critter again. (*Aloud.*) Haven't you made a mistake, my dear lady; or perhaps you are not aware—that is, probably you have lost your way? (*Aside.*) I'd better humor her.

MRS. M. Lost my way! (*Aside.*) He certainly is a queer one.

UNCLE. Do you live around here, or do you ——?

MRS. M. Do I live around here? Didn't I give your partner my address and didn't you jest send Silas after me? And me trudging way up here expecting it wuz a party that wanted some cooking done, and here I find ——

UNCLE. Cooking! Did you say cooking? By Jove, you're right; of course. Wait here. (*Aside.*) She may be crazy, but any port in a storm. (*Aloud.*) I'll call my niece and she will explain the details. [*Exit* UNCLE R.]

MRS. M. Queerest actions I ever saw. He must really want a cook, or else I'm too thick to see through his game. I can't for the life of me see how he can do much detecting down here in Happy Valley Junction. I'm rather sorry I asked his services; I think that other one, the lawyer chap, has more sense. He wouldn't come tramping down here to fix this thing when I've been here over fifteen years and nothing has ever happened to my knowledge. (*Enter* L. DICK, *who crosses stage in very stealthy manner.*) Well, I do declare; if here ain't the other one.

DICK (*starts*). Oh! Don't ever do—What! It can't be—it is—Mrs. Mullen.

MRS. M. It surely is, young man. What do you ——?

DICK. Now this is what I call fortunate. I was just wondering how I would locate you as I have some very important news to impart, and here you are. You see ——

MRS. M. I'm beginning to see quite a bit.

DICK. As I was saying, we came down here especially to look up this case of yours, and ——

MRS. M. Pray tell me, what you can do down here in this neck of woods?

DICK. Madam, all indications point this way, and allow me to assure you that your husband will very shortly be brought to light, and then—and then ——

MRS. M. And then, what?

DICK. Why then, everything is very simple; we will start proceedings to get possession of the bonds.

MRS. M. You sound more assuring than the other young man.

DICK. Ah, you have been talking with Francis.

MRS. M. I've been trying to, but for the life of me, I can't make any sense out of his actions. First he makes believe he knows me, and then he acts just like a ——

(Enter FRANK R.)

DICK. Here he is now.

MRS. M. (*aside*). My, but he certainly changed his disguise quick enough. (*Aloud.*) Well, young man, have you gathered your senses yet?

FRANK. Why, this—this is Mrs. Mullen. Uncle said the cook was here ——

DICK. Of course, this is ——

MRS. M. Don't bother him; he'll get his bearings soon and come to his senses.

FRANK. Ah, I had quite forgotten that you lived here at the Junction, Mrs. Mullen. Now that I recall it, Dick mentioned it to me once. But what are you doing here—has anything happened?

MRS. M. I suppose you have a disguise for every one of your many moods, but for the life of me I can't see the need of changing from one to the other jest to talk to me; wuzn't the other one you had on a few minutes ago all right, or ——?

FRANK. The other one?

DICK. Mrs. Mullen, pardon my interruption, but he has been working quite hard on this case of late and the loss of sleep has tired his mind, but he will arise to the occasion as soon as he has had a much needed rest.

FRANK. Yes, that's it. That is just what we came

here for, to rest my distracted nerves, and to sort of—
sort of ——

DICK. Bring things together.

FRANK. Exactly; to bring things together.

MRS. M. I hope all these things get together soon; but tell me, pray, why you could not talk to me in your other disguise ——

FRANK (*aside*). She gets crazier every minute. (*Aloud*.) You must be mistaken as this is the only suit I brought with me.

MRS. M. Mistaken! Mistaken! (*UNCLE enters unobserved from house*.) I should say not; you were here and I was talking to you a few minutes ago, and you had on that same rig that makes you look like a hungry old man without any brains.

FRANK. Old man?

DICK. By Jove, I am beginning to see daylight. The old geyser she refers to ——

(*SILAS enters L. c. and stands back of hedge*.)

UNCLE (*coming briskly off of porch*). You Mormon! Get out of here before I—I—I —— G-r-r-r! I'll make you see daylight if ever I get my hands on you. You—you bigamist. Well, why don't you go?

DICK. I'm waiting for you to show me that daylight.

UNCLE. So! So! Silas, show your authority as constable of this town and put this heathen where he will see a little daylight coming between iron bars.

SILAS (*approaching DICK*). Mister, you're under arrest; not that I'm over-anxious ter do this, but the law must be obeyed and I am sworn ter do my duty.

MRS. M. (*to UNCLE*). Sir! How dare you have him arrested; he's the best friend I have.

UNCLE. Best friend! You may think so, but if you knew all about his other wives you'd haul in your horns.

FRANK. Uncle! Please do not have him put in jail.

UNCLE. Silence! This is once that I am going to be obeyed. Lady, that man has three wives to my knowledge, and is blessed with a very disagreeable temper.

Constable, you hold him on those charges and I'll appear against him and see that he gets his just deserts.

SILAS. Don't worry, I'll take good care of him. He's the first criminal I've had a chance ter grab since I've been constable here. Come on! March!

[*Exit DICK in custody of SILAS L.*

MRS. M. I'm glad I am finding out a few of these queers and fakers. (*Looking at FRANK.*) Now, young man, what have you to say for yourself?

FRANK. There is a mistake, I'm sure —

UNCLE. Young man? Did I hear you call my niece a young man?

MRS. M. Why, to be sure; he claims to be the one and only celebrated de —

FRANK (*screams*). Oh! There's a mouse!

(*Jumps on bench R., and gathers his skirts up.*)

MRS. M. Where, where?

FRANK. There!

MRS. M. Oh!

(*Jumps up beside FRANK. Business of terror.*)

UNCLE (*grabbing broom*). Where is he? I don't see him.

FRANK. Over there. (*Points across stage. UNCLE looks for mouse. FRANK, aside to MRS. MULLEN.*) Listen, he thinks I'm his niece. Don't tell him the difference. Help me out, and I'll explain later. There's no mouse.

UNCLE. I guess he's gone, more frightened than you are.

(*MRS. MULLEN and FRANK getting down.*)

FRANK. I'm glad he has gone.

MRS. M. Now, my fine young lady, what is the idea of sending for me?

UNCLE. } Why, we want a cook.

FRANK. }

MRS. M. So Silas said.

UNCLE. We're starving.

FRANK. Right this way, Mrs. Mullen.

UNCLE. Yes, start right in, I'm famished. You needn't worry about your wages; I'll pay whatever you ask, as long as it is reasonable.

MRS. M. Well, if you're starving I'm not one to stand still and see you die. *[Exit R., with FRANK.]*

UNCLE. A queer article, but if she can cook I'm satisfied. Philander should be back; it's getting late. I'll go look for him. *[Exit L.]*

(Enter FRANK R.)

FRANK. There, I had to promise to explain the whole business to her, and ask her to have faith in Dick. Poor Dick! I wonder how he will like prison life? I must do something to get him out of that place.

(Enter DORA and ALICE, bareheaded at R. C., very cautiously.)

DORA *(up stage, back of hedge)*. Frank, are you alone?

FRANK *(starting)*. Hello, girls! Yes, I'm very much alone. *(GIRLS come down stage.)* That is, Uncle has disappeared somewhere and I'm willing to take a chance this once.

ALICE! But if he should come; I should say you had enough to trouble you, by what Dora tells me.

FRANK. Oh! We can make up some plausible excuse; that is a mere trifle to what is bothering me now.

DORA. More trouble? I thought you had plenty without adding any more.

ALICE. She has been all worked up about it; now I tell her that it is nothing but a lark and everything will come out all right.

FRANK. It may be a lark, but Dick's a jail-bird.

ALICE. }
DORA. } What do you mean?

FRANK. Uncle has had him arrested for bigamy.

ALICE. Oh! Dick, arrested for bigamy! This is too much. Frank, you are to blame for this and you must have him released at once.

DORA. Be calm, my dear, it is only a lark, you know.

FRANK. Yes, it is up to us to get him out somehow, either by hook or crook; until after this Uncle business is over.

ALICE. Until your Uncle business is over! I like that. Frank, you must get him out now.

DORA. I should think that a smart young lawyer would be able to win his own case.

FRANK. You are both right. As soon as this marriage business is over, Dick can then explain, but in the meantime we must do something to get him out.

ALICE. }
DORA. } But how?

FRANK. I know of no way, unless one of you girls would hunt up the constable and send him here.

ALICE. But where will one find this constable?

FRANK. Just go down to the village and inquire for Silas Sickelmoore.

ALICE. All right, I'm willing. I can do that much, which is more than standing here doing nothing, like some people I know. [Exit ALICE L.]

FRANK. Here's hoping that she finds him, but blamed if I know what I'll say to him.

DORA. Frank, why do you keep up this deception, why not tell Uncle all and face the music?

FRANK (*leading her to seat L.*). I'll tell you why, Dora. In the first place, we can find use for that million very easily, if I ever get it.

DORA. But this scheme of Dick's will never work. There is nothing solid about it.

FRANK. I fear you are right, but why worry; you know I haven't seen you for some time and let us not think of such problems. (*Puts arm about her.*)

(*Enter UNCLE L.*)

UNCLE. Frances, I say, Frances.

FRANK (*jumping up*). Here, quick! Put these on.

(*Hands her apron and cap, which she dons.*)

UNCLE. Frances! I wonder where—ah, here you are. I was just—Hello! Who is this?

FRANK. This, Uncle, is the new maid I've just engaged to help Mrs. Mullen.

UNCLE. New maid, eh! They seem to come in bunches. So you are to help the cook?

DORA. Yes—yes, sir.

UNCLE. Well, there is nothing you can do out here.

FRANK. You see, she hasn't been engaged very long and was just getting acquainted.

UNCLE. So! Well, come right along with me, young lady, and I will make you acquainted.

(UNCLE *exits* R., followed by DORA, who shakes her fist at FRANK.)

FRANK. It's no use, I get deeper and deeper into this thing at every turn, and nothing seems to pan out right at all. If something doesn't turn up soon I'm doomed. The wedding is to take place very shortly and —

(*Enter* MRS. MULLEN *at* R.)

MRS. M. Ah, here you are. I wuz wondering if I would find you. Now tell me what you are going to do about my case.

FRANK. I think Mr. Tate would be the proper man for you to see.

MRS. M. But how on earth be I going to talk to him, when he's behind the bars?

FRANK. You are right, but I have sent for the constable and if it will work, perhaps I can buy him off until after this evening, and then Mr. Tate will be able to explain everything.

MRS. M. You'll never be able to buy Silas. But if I knew everything you have told wuz true, about this 'ere wedding business and the million dollars, I could get Silas to let him out for a while, but it would mean—well, as I'm a woman of few words, it would mean that I would be obliged to give Silas the idea that I wuz—wuz —

FRANK. Was what?

MRS. M. Was encouraging attention from him. And that is one thing I would not do, especially with one hus-

band prob'ly now living. But then I suppose Silas would wait until I got a divorce. But I am not the kind that would lead a man like Silas on. No, as I said: I'm a woman of few words and I won't do it. I never ought to of told you. No, never! [*Exits quickly R.*]

FRANK. So that is how the wind blows, eh? Well, if Silas would only —— (*Looking off L.*) Here he comes now; perhaps I can work this scheme.

(*Enter SILAS L.*)

SILAS. Howdy, Miss; a young lady said as how ye would like ter see me.

FRANK. It is not exactly that, but there is a young lady here that I'm sure would like to see you very much.

SILAS. You mean—you don't mean Sarah Ann?

FRANK. I mean Mrs. Mullen, if that is Sarah Ann?

SILAS. The same! The same!

FRANK. Now that you mention it, she said that when you called I was to notify her. Now, she has had an offer of marriage from a man who has just arrived, suppose we say, my Uncle.

SILAS. What, that old skeezics?

FRANK. Hold on! Now suppose we say that this man knows that her husband is dead and proposes to her, well, she seems undecided what to do until she has had a chance to talk with you. Undoubtedly you have always advised her, being a man of the law.

SILAS. Yep, that's it, I guess.

FRANK. She would like to see you, but you must not mention how you learned that her husband was dead. You might let it drop that you're acquainted with the fact, if you think best. I'll send her right out.

[*Exit FRANK R.*]

SILAS (*nervously walking back and forth*). So that is what that foxy old gink with the spinach wanted her to cook fur, is it? Wants ter marry her, does he? By gum! He won't! Thought he would try her cooking fust, I suppose. We'll see about this. Thinks everybody is going ter do jest as he wants 'em ter. Yes, had me arrest that air bag o' mint feller without any warrint,

and lay myself liable. I'll let him out of jail if she marries that old fossil, by gum I ——

(*Enter MRS. MULLEN R.*)

MRS. M. Hello, Silas, I heard that you would like to speak to me.

SILAS. I heard the same; but the main thing is, have yer time fur a little talk?

MRS. M. I have a few minutes to spare, but not long, as my time is not my own, now. (*Sitting on seat R.*)

SILAS (*aside*). Time not her own! I suppose he's got her. (*Aloud.*) I heard some news ter-day.

(*Coming down near MRS. MULLEN.*)

MRS. M. News! What kind, good or bad?

SILAS. Well, some might call it bad news and some might call it good news. All depends on the person.

MRS. M. I can't say that I'm over-anxious to hear it, but I suppose I must humor you and let you get it off your mind. What wuz it?

(*MRS. MULLEN moves over on seat.*)

SILAS (*sitting beside her*). I heard as how your husband had committed suicide.

MRS. M. What! Oh, no! No!

SILAS (*aside*). By gum! I didn't think she would take it like that.

MRS. M. Silas, are you sure?

SILAS. No, I can't say I'm sure but I heard he wuz dead and heard it on good authority but wuz told; not ter tell, so ye will have to wait until you are notified before ye can put on mourning.

MRS. M. Mourning! Silas, do you think I would put mourning on fur him, or in fact fur any man?

SILAS. Wouldn't ye—wouldn't ye put it on fer me?

MRS. M. Fur you, Silas! Land sakes! Are you that fur gone?

SILAS (*aside*). I guess I'm gone all right. (*Aloud.*) I mean, if you would—that is I mean if—if I wuz yer second husband and should commit——

MRS. M. Oh, Silas, don't say that horrid word —

SILAS. Well—would ye put it on fer me?

MRS. M. Silas, do you mean this fur a proposal? Because if you do, it is certainly a queer way to pop the question, but as I am a woman of few words, I'll say this much: if you will go and let that man out of jail that you arrested here this afternoon, I'll—I'll —

SILAS. You'll what?

MRS. M. I'll give you my answer.

SILAS. 'Twun't do.

MRS. M. It will have to.

SILAS. Suppose, suppose someone else would ask ye in the meantime.

MRS. M. Someone else? Don't worry, Silas, I'll be right here when you come back. Hurry up and let that critter out.

SILAS. Sarah Ann, I could hug ye.

(Enter UNCLE from R.)

UNCLE *(coming down)*. Ah, constable, put a strong guard on that prisoner and I'll see that you are well paid.

SILAS *(getting up)*. You mind your own business, old sourkrout.

[Exit SILAS C.]

UNCLE. Mind my own business, eh? You confounded old he turnip, you—you — Oh, why don't that minister hurry up, and where can Philander be, and where is Frances? *(Seeing MRS. MULLEN.)* Well, where is she?

MRS. M. *(getting up)*. I'm sure I don't know, but I think she is in the house.

[Exit R.]

UNCLE. No such thing, she is out here.

[Exit L.]

(FRANK and DORA enter R. C. and stand back of hedge.)

FRANK. The coast seems to be clear; perhaps you had better run.

DORA. Here, take these.

(Hands him apron and cap.)

FRANK. Quick! Some one is coming. Run!

DORA. Don't worry, I'm going. *[Runs off L. C.]*

FRANK (*coming down*). I was beginning to fear that she would never get away. Uncle was right on his guard. Now that the coast is clear I think I'll have a little smoke. (*Produces pipe from bosom of dress, and starts to scratch match on thigh. Stops, considers dress and lights it on bench. Sitting on bench smoking.*) This is something like comfort; now if —

(*Enter ALICE L.*)

ALICE. Ah, here you are.

FRANK (*jumping up*). Alice, you took ten years right out of my life then. I thought it was Uncle.

ALICE. Now I like that. Do I resemble Uncle? Oh, I see, the pipe! Tell me, Frank, has that constable been here?

FRANK. Yes, he was here recently, and I had quite a talk with him.

ALICE. Is he going to release Dick?

FRANK. I'm not sure about that, as I left that part of the affair to Mrs. Mullen.

ALICE. Did this Mrs. Mullen succeed?

FRANK. I'm not sure what the outcome was as —

(*Enter UNCLE L.*)

ALICE. Here comes your uncle.

FRANK. Here! Quick! Put these on.

(*Hands her apron and cap, which she puts on.*)

UNCLE. Frances, I have been looking everywhere for Philander and can't — (UNCLE *sniffs*.)

FRANK (*to ALICE*). Take this. (*Hands pipe.*)

UNCLE (*sniffing*). I smell smoke, tobacco smoke; who has been smoking here? (UNCLE, *coming down, sees ALICE.*) Hello! You out here again — (ALICE *turns toward UNCLE, pipe in hand.*) Godfrey Dominoes! She's smoking a pipe! Young lady, are you in the habit of parading around out of doors filling the air with this vile tobacco smoke? Where is your mother? You should be ashamed to —

ALICE. Sir! Do you —?

UNCLE. Silence! Don't you dare interrupt me. Oh, what is this world coming to? Smoking tobacco!

FRANK. But it isn't tobacco, Uncle.

ALICE. Oh, no!

UNCLE. Isn't tobacco! What is it, then—an old rubber boot?

FRANK. This is—this is mullen.

ALICE. Yes, Mrs. Mullen!

UNCLE. Mullen? It smells like hemp.

FRANK. You see, the doctor ordered her to smoke mullen for her health, as she is troubled with—with asthma.

ALICE. Yes, asthma.

UNCLE. Um! Well, hereafter, young lady, confine your smoking to your own quarters, and by the way, I would like a little something to eat. [UNCLE *exits* R.]

ALICE (*stamping*). Frank, this is the last straw. I'm through helping you out with all your lies.

FRANK. Forgive me, Alice, but it was the only way out. Dora was obliged to serve her time as the maid until she made her escape, and now it's up to you—so please play up to it and go get Uncle something to eat.

ALICE. Well, if I must I will. But don't blame me if I poison him. (FRANK *escorts* ALICE *off* R.)

(*Enter* DICK and SILAS L.)

DICK. I say, constable, I'll not forget this. You're a brick.

SILAS. It's all right; I didn't have any real charge ter keep ye on. If old wish bones wants ye arrested he'll have ter get a warrant.

DICK. I'll not forget it, anyway.

SILAS. I think I'll go out ter the kitchen and see if Sarah Ann is working too hard. [*Exit* R. C.]

DICK. It's good to be on the job again; I wonder what has transpired since I left; well, I haven't much time now. I must get this note to Philander, somehow. It's lucky I thought of writing it while penned up in that chicken-coop of a jail—I wonder if it sounds all right. (*Reads note.*) "My dearest Philander—I have a secret

I would like to impart to you before we are married; something very important by which we may both become very prosperous and happy. If you love me meet me near the willow-tree by the river at once. Your own Frances—with love——” There, that ought to bring him.

(*Enter TIMOTHY C.*)

TIM. Say, are you still hanging around here?

DICK. It's all wrong, Timothy. I'll never hang, and what is more, I'll be around here when the rest of these jail-birds are serving time.

TIM. What do ye mean, jail-birds?

DICK. Listen! This crowd is the biggest gang of crooks you ever laid eyes on; they have hired this place to make counterfeit money in, and they will soon be run to earth. The whole bunch——

TIM. I guess you're trying to string me, but it don't go.

DICK. Ah, far from it, my friend. Have you not noticed that they spend money like water? It's all bogus money, every bit of it. Now I expect you to keep mum about this, but if you'll help me and do as I say, you will never regret it. I want you to help Silas, the constable here, in a little matter I have on hand.

TIM. Is Silas with ye?

DICK. Surely! We officers of the law always work together.

TIM. I'm with ye then; whatever Silas does is all right. What do ye want me ter do?

DICK. Listen! (*Goes to all the exits and peers off, followed by TIMOTHY, who does likewise. Coming down c., followed by TIMOTHY.*) I have here a writ from the Supreme Judicial Department of Prevaricators.

TIM. So?

DICK. Now I must have a trusty messenger to take this to the party addressed.

TIM. That's me! Where do I take it?

DICK. You are to deliver it to the one and only Philander Filmore. Then you are to guide him to the

willow-tree near the river, and remember that Miss Frances gave you the note, if he should ask.

TIM. And what then?

DICK. Silas will be at the river and will take charge of him then, but if he needs any help, just duff in.

TIM. I'm to help Silas, eh? Punch him! Whack him! And everything!

DICK. Not Silas.

TIM. No, I mean Philander, the counterfeiter.

DICK. That's it; now hurry and find him.

TIM. I'll find him as sure as my name is Timothy Haye. [Exit TIMOTHY L. C.]

DICK. Now to find Silas and get him excited.

[Exit DICK R. C.]

(DORA enters L., very cautiously.)

DORA (*approaching pergola L.*). I wonder where they all are? Dick said that I must surely be near here this evening in time for the wedding. I haven't the slightest idea what he intends to do; in fact, I don't believe Dick will be here unless he breaks jail.

(Enter PHILANDER, minus his hat, at C. DORA crouches behind table in pergola.)

PHIL. (*looking about*). Ah, the time draws near. Many years have I waited for this event. I suppose the poor fool thinks I'm in love with her; I'll show her where my love lies, and show her dear Uncle, too, as soon as we're married and I can lay my hands on the rest of that money. Of course I would not harm them but for my comfort it would be well that they both disappeared. (*Looking off L.*) Hello, here comes that hayseed of a Timothy; I thought at first it was the minister. I'm glad this is going to be a quiet affair; I was afraid at one time that the old fellow would insist on a bang-up wedding.

(TIMOTHY enters L.)

TIM. I've bin looking all over the place fur you.

PHIL. Now you have found me, what do you want?

TIM. I don't know as I want anything, and then ag'in perhaps I might want something, but ——

PHIL. But what?

TIM. I've got a note here for yer.

PHIL. A note for me? Let me have it.

(TIMOTHY hands him note which PHILANDER reads.)

TIM. I wuz told to wait here and take ye back to the place ——

PHIL. (*suspiciously*). What place?

TIM. Why, the place where Miss Frances wuz when she give me that air note.

PHIL. Oh, yes, to be sure. Here, take this.

(*Hands him money.*)

TIM. (*hands back of him*). No, I wouldn't touch it, that is, I don't dare ——

PHIL. Don't dare!

TIM. That is, I'm not allowed to receive tips. Thank you just the same. (*Aside.*) Gosh, I s'pose that was counterfeit.

PHIL. Just as you say; now I'm ready to follow you, but just a minute, I must get my hat.

[*Exit PHILANDER R.*]

TIM. Gosh, that wuz a narrow escape; he came near working some of that bogus money off on me, but I was too smart fer him.

(*Enter SILAS and DICK R. C.*)

DICK. Here he is now! Have you delivered that note yet?

TIM. Yep, she's all delivered and he's in the house after his hat.

SILAS. You don't say.

DICK. Quick, to the river, Silas, and remember my instructions.

[*Exit SILAS L.*]

(*DICK hides back of hedge.*)

TIM. Sh, here he comes.

(*Enter PHILANDER, wearing large straw hat.*)

PHIL. Now I'm ready; lead the way, my man.

TIM. Right this way.

[TIMOTHY and PHILANDER *exeunt* L.]

DICK (*coming down stage*). Ha! Ha! Waiting at the church. Now for a ——

DORA (*approaching* DICK). Dick, what is the meaning of all this? First I hear that horrid old Philander telling what he will do to Frank and his uncle and then off he goes to meet Frank at the river and ——

DICK. Slow, slow, take your foot off the gas. If you care to know the details come with me as I have enough to keep me occupied for the next few minutes and will explain while at work, and if you are game you can be the cause of making or breaking the whole affair.

DORA. I can, how?

DICK. Come, I'll show you. [DICK and DORA *exit* L.]

(*Enter* MRS. MULLEN R.)

MRS. M. I wonder if Silas let that lawyer of mine out of jail. I don't believe he did because if he had, he would of bin right back for his answer. I wonder where Silas got his news about—well—there, what a fool I am, a woman of my age, and here I am ——

UNCLE (*head out of door* R.). Has he arrived yet?

MRS. M. No, but he ought to be here; it's time for him.

UNCLE (*coming down stage*). Time for him, I should say so.

MRS. M. It certainly takes him a long while ter walk from the jail ——

UNCLE. Jail! Jail! Is the minister of this village an inmate of the jail ——

MRS. M. Good land! What am I saying?

[*Exit* MRS. MULLEN, *hurriedly*, R.]

UNCLE. By George, she gets crazier and crazier every minute. Although I'm beginning to believe that she is not the only loony one. That new maid is a funny one; first time I met her here she was an altogether different looking girl than she is now. She seems taller, looks different, talks different, she is different. Once I thought she looked like that Dick Tate's wife and now, she begins

to look like that affinity of his; by Jove, she acts like her, too. It can't be—way out here. That reminds me, I must not forget to appear against that bigamist and see that he gets all that is coming to him. He'll learn that I'm a man of my word. I guess he won't care to face me again very soon.

(*Enter DICK C., disguised as parson, wearing gray wig and side whiskers, also black soft hat and frock coat, and carrying Bible.*)

DICK. Good evening, brother; is this Mr. Felton?

UNCLE. Ah, the parson, I presume. I was beginning to think you would not be here at the appointed time. I was rather worried that you might not have received word.

DICK. Oh, yes! I received the note, and would have been here much sooner but was detained by—by one of my congregation who needed advice——

UNCLE. Surely, but everything is all right, now that you are here. If you will excuse me I'll call the rest of my household. You see I am rather anxious that this event be carried out promptly.

DICK. Naturally, naturally, nothing like putting things over in quick time, that is with more or less pep to 'em, you know—that is—I mean we must not lose faith in our religion.

UNCLE. True words, Parson—I beg your pardon but your name——

DICK. The Rev. Willie Splicum.

UNCLE. As I was saying, if you will take a seat here and rest after your trip, I'll endeavor to raise the rest of my family. [UNCLE *exits* R.]

DICK (*sitting* R.). By Jove! But I was scared; thought he was going to recognize me as his escaped bigamist, but he was certainly fooled. Now if I can fool the rest of 'em as easy, I'll be——

(*Enter ALICE* R. C.)

ALICE. Oh, I beg your pardon, I didn't realize that anyone was——

DICK (*getting up*). Alice!

ALICE. I'm sure you—it's not. Is it you, Dick?

DICK. Sh! Don't tell the whole crowd. Just keep this under your hat, and help me out.

ALICE. But why this masquerade? You look like a minister.

DICK. Thanks, I feel like an undertaker. But to come to the point, I'm going to marry Frank.

ALICE. You are going to marry Frank! How many more of you men are going to try and marry Frank?

DICK. I mean I am going to perform the ceremony and marry him.

ALICE. To Philander?

DICK. No, to Dora. You see my power of a notary gives me that right and I have the license here all made out. Frank gave it to me this afternoon.

ALICE. But I don't understand.

DICK. I haven't time to explain at present, but if I succeed in this Frank owes me one hundred a week forever-after. Now I want you to help.

ALICE. How?

DICK. When I arrive at that part of the ceremony where I call the names of bride and groom, you must scream, and cry on Uncle's shoulder so that he will not be able to understand what I say.

ALICE. But I can't.

DICK. Very well, then I can't make a million for Frank or ———

ALICE. But I'll try.

DICK. That's the stuff; Alice, you're a brick. Not a word, someone is coming.

(*Enter FRANK R.*)

FRANK. Ah!

DICK. Frank, come here, quick.

FRANK. It's you, Dick?

ALICE. Of course it is.

DICK. Don't waste time. Listen to me, Frank. I'm going to marry you to Philander Filmore, as I said, and I am also going to make you the life partner of Dora.

You will come into the million, and perhaps more, and also have Dora.

FRANK (*sarcastically*). Fine.

DICK. But listen, you must put all faith in me and not be surprised at what happens, do not interrupt any part of the ceremony and—sh! They are coming. Remember, trust in me.

FRANK. But, I say—I——

(*Enter UNCLE and MRS. MULLEN R.*)

UNCLE. I can't find Philander anywhere. I've looked all over.

FRANK. Where can he be?

DICK. If you are referring to the gentleman who is to be the groom here this evening——

UNCLE. Yes, yes, the groom!

DICK. Ah, your fears are groundless, as I was talking to him on my way here and he mentioned that he would join us directly. A-hem!

UNCLE. You have met him then, and I should judge you have also made yourself acquainted with my charming niece here. And this is her maid, and this is Mrs. Mullen, of our culinary department, with whom no doubt you are well acquainted.

MRS. M. I can't say as I have ever had the pleasure of meeting this gentleman before.

UNCLE. What! I guess you're not a very strong church goer, Mrs. Mullen, not to recognize your own pastor.

MRS. M. My own pastor! What, that?

DICK. Oh! A slight mistake; allow me to straighten this matter out. Mrs. Mullen is right, I'm not the minister of her church.

UNCLE. Not the parson we sent for!

DICK. It is like this: the minister of this parish was suddenly called away this morning and I was sent to fill his place until his return; so you see, that explains why this dear lady has never met me before.

UNCLE. Of course, very easy for some people to be mistaken. Now I am never fooled. (*Looking L.*)

Hello! There is Philander now, and that constable fellow is coming right along behind him. Well, let 'em come, the more the merrier. I am beginning to feel young again.

(Enter DORA L., dressed in PHILANDER'S long linen duster, straw hat, trousers, collar and necktie showing. Also wearing mustache like PHILANDER.)

DICK. Ah, my friend, I see you were not long in following me.

UNCLE. Philander, I was a bit worried for fear you would keep us waiting, but I see my fears were without reason, and as you are here let us carry out our nuptial programme.

(Enter SILAS and TIMOTHY, and stand back of hedge. MRS. MULLEN on steps of house. ALICE on porch, UNCLE down R., DICK C., FRANK L., DORA L. C.)

DICK. Very well; if the young couple will stand here facing me. There, so.

MRS. M. Excuse me for interrupting, but the man ought ter be on the other side——

DICK. Thank you, madam.

(FRANK and DORA exchange places.)

MRS. M. I wouldn't have him marry me. Wonder who's going to stand up with 'em.

UNCLE (turning on MRS. MULLEN). Be still! Don't you suppose the parson knows his business?

DICK (takes book in hand, reading). "Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the face of this company, to join together this man and this——"

(PHILANDER dashes on at L., in a barrel, minus his hat, and outer garments. Hose and garters showing below barrel.)

PHIL. (down C.). Stop! Stop this marriage, before it is too late. (SILAS and TIMOTHY crouch behind

hedge. Pointing at DORA.) That man is an imposter. They stole my clothes. I am ——

UNCLE. Philander!

(During the following speech SILAS comes down stage.)

MRS. M. *(coming c.)*. Philander, nothing! This is Henry Thaddeus Mullen, my husband, who deserted me over twenty years ago, and stole everything I had. You! You!

PHIL. You have made ——

(SILAS hits at PHILANDER, who ducks, and blow falls on barrel.)

SILAS. Shut up! You're under arrest. I guess it won't take the judge long to make you a single man and me a——

MRS. M. Say it, Silas, it's your last chance.

UNCLE. Madam, are you sure this man is your husband?

MRS. M. Tell him the truth.

PHIL. *(out of sight in barrel)*. Yes, she is right.

DICK. Mrs. Mullen, as we have located your husband for you ——

MRS. M. You located him?

DICK. Yes, you see this was——well——this was a carefully planned trap for him.

UNCLE. And who are you? *(DICK takes off wig and whiskers.)* Ye Gods! The bigamist! When did you get out?

DICK. No, I am far from a bigamist. I am Richard Tate, Esquire, a close friend of Francis, and also Mrs. Mullen's lawyer.

UNCLE. And if this article here in this barrel is the real bigamist and had the nerve to think he could marry my niece, who is this gentleman? *(Pointing to DORA. DORA takes off hat and mustache.)* Great scott! Tate's wife!

FRANK. No, Uncle, he hasn't any wife; that was another mistake.

UNCLE. Then who ——

DICK. This young lady is Miss Dora Hale, the choice of your nephew's heart.

UNCLE. My nephew? Never had a nephew.

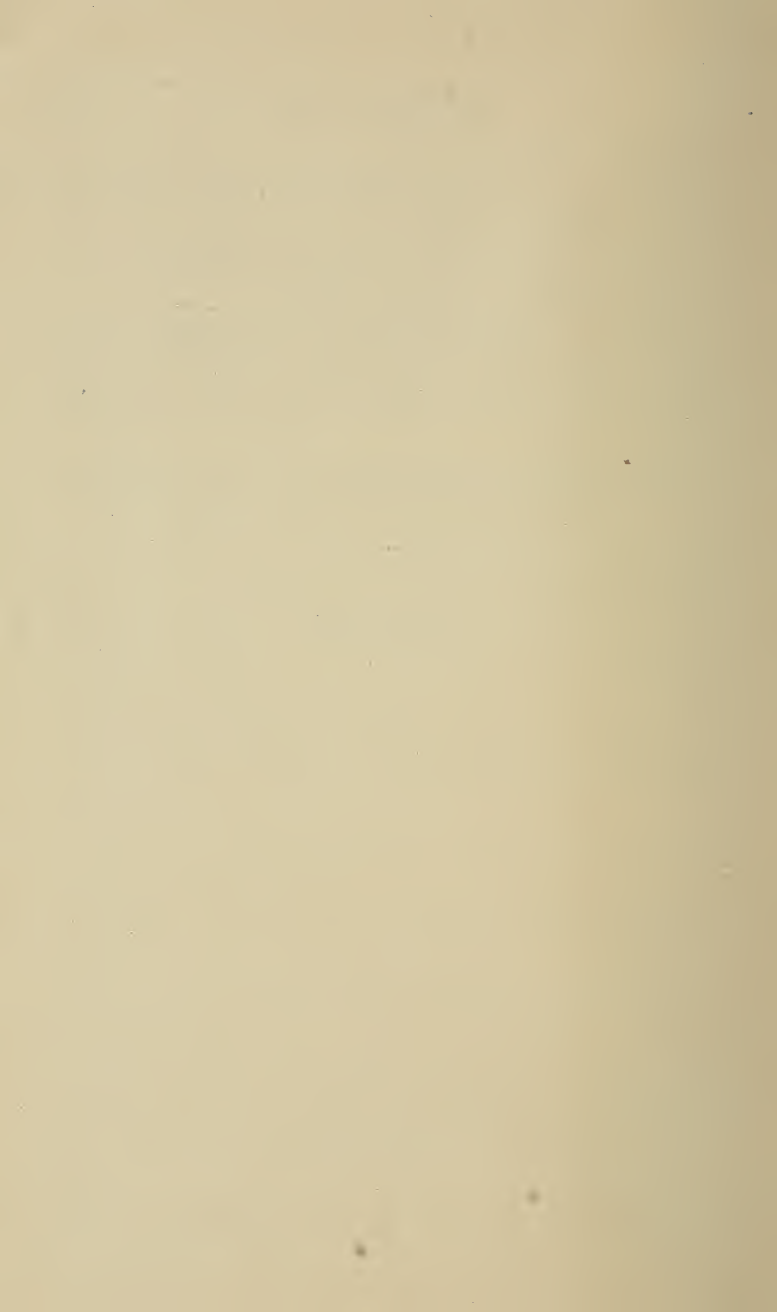
FRANK (*taking off wig*). But you have now.

DICK (*aside*). Good-bye million!

UNCLE. So; I'm beginning to understand a few of your capers. Well, I still hold to my bargain. I have always wished for a nephew, and now I not only have a nephew, but I am also going to have a most delightful niece, I'm sure.

(*PHILANDER looks up out of barrel. SILAS hits at him; he ducks back in barrel as curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN



Plays for Junior High Schools

	Males	Females	Time	Price
Sally Lunn	3	4	1½ hrs.	25c
Mr. Bob	3	4	1½ "	25c
The Man from Brandon	3	4	1½ "	25c
A Box of Monkeys	2	3	1¼ "	25c
A Rice Pudding	2	3	1¼ "	25c
Class Day	4	3	¾ "	25c
Chums	3	2	¾ "	25c
An Easy Mark	5	2	½ "	25c
Pa's New Housekeeper	3	2	1 "	25c
Not On the Program	3	3	¾ "	25c
The Cool Collegians	3	4	1½ "	25c
The Elopement of Ellen	4	3	2 "	35c
Tommy's Wife	3	5	1½ "	35c
Johnny's New Suit	2	5	¾ "	25c
Thirty Minutes for Refreshment	4	3	½ "	25c
West of Omaha	4	3	¾ "	25c
The Flying Wedge	3	5	¾ "	25c
My Brother's Keeper	5	3	1½ "	25c
The Private Tutor	5	3	2 "	35c
Me an' Otis	5	4	2 "	25c
Up to Freddie	3	6	1¼ "	25c
My Cousin Timmy	2	8	1 "	25c
Aunt Abigail and the Boys	9	2	1 "	25c
Caught Out	9	2	1½ "	25c
Constantine Pueblo Jones	10	4	2 "	35c
The Cricket On the Hearth	6	7	1½ "	25c
The Deacon's Second Wife	6	6	2 "	35c
Five Feet of Love	5	6	1½ "	25c
The Hurdy Gurdy Girl	9	9	2 "	35c
Camp Fidelity Girls	1	11	2 "	35c
Carrotty Nell		15	1 "	25c
A Case for Sherlock Holmes		10	1½ "	35c
The Clancey Kids		14	1 "	25c
The Happy Day		7	½ "	25c
I Grant You Three Wishes		14	½ "	25c
Just a Little Mistake	1	5	¾ "	25c
The Land of Night		18	1¼ "	25c
Local and Long Distance	1	6	½ "	25c
The Original Two Bits		7	½ "	25c
An Outsider		7	½ "	25c
Oysters		6	½ "	25c
A Pan of Fudge		6	½ "	25c
A Peck of Trouble		5	½ "	25c
A Precious Pickle		7	½ "	25c
The First National Boot	7	2	1 "	25c
His Father's Son	14		1¾ "	35c
The Turn In the Road	9		1½ "	25c
A Half Back's Interference	10		¾ "	25c
The Revolving Wedge	5	3	1 "	25c
Mose	11	10	1½ "	25c

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

Recent Plays That Have "Gone Over the Top"

	Males	Females	Time	Price	Royalty
The Adventures of Grandpa	4	5	2 hrs.	35c	Free
Turning the Trick	6	5	2 1/4	35c	"
The American Flag	6	3	2	35c	"
Captain Cranberry	8	3	2	35c	"
Mr. Kelley from Kalamazoo	8	3	2	35c	"
If I Only Had a Million	7	6	2	35c	"
The Country Doctor	6	5	2	35c	"
Country Folks	6	5	2	35c	"
A Couple of Million	6	5	2	35c	\$10.00
Cranberry Corners	6	6	2	35c	Free
Five Feet of Love	5	6	1 1/2	25c	"
Alias Brown	11	5	2	35c	"
Expense No Object	10	3	2	35c	"
The Heiress Hunters	7	7	2 1/4	35c	"
Picking a Winner	9	5	2	35c	"
Elizabeth's Young Man	1	3	1/2	25c	"
Freddy Goes to College	4	2	3/4	25c	"
A Full House	3	3	1/2	25c	"
The Girl From Upper Seven	10	11	2	35c	"
Grandma Gibbs of the Red Cross	8	9	2	35c	"
Honeymoon Flats	6	8	1 1/2	25c	"
Plain People	5	5	2	35c	"
Red Acre Farm	7	5	2	35c	"
Johnny's New Suit	2	5	3/4	25c	"
Local and Long Distance	1	6	1/2	25c	"
The Sisterhood of Bridget	7	6	2	35c	"
The Loving Cup	4	9	1/2	35c	\$5.00
The Guest Retainer	5	3	2	35c	Free
Old Days in Dixie	5	8	2 1/4	35c	\$10.00
Mrs. Briggs of the Poultry Yard	4	7	2	35c	Free
Much Ado About Betty	10	12	2	35c	"
No Trespassing	6	5	2	35c	"
Our Wives	7	4	2	35c	"
Pa's New Housekeeper	3	2	3/4	25c	"
And Billy Disappeared	5	6	2 1/4	60c	\$10.00
The Rebellion of Mrs. Barclay	3	6	1 3/4	35c	Free
When a Feller Needs a Friend	5	5	2 1/4	35c	\$10.00
Allison Makes Hay	7	7	2	60c	\$15.00
The Slacker	2	7	3/4	25c	Free
The Arrival of Kitty	5	4	2	60c	\$10.00
Six Miles From a Lemon	6	4	2	60c	\$10.00
Teddy, or The Runaways	4	4	2 1/4	35c	Free
The Man Who Went	7	3	2	35c	\$10.00
The Troubling of Bethesda Pool	2	12	3/4	25c	Free
Valley Farm	6	6	2 1/2	35c	"
The Village School Ma'am	6	5	2	35c	"
Willowdale	7	5	2 1/4	35c	"
The Country Minister	8	5	2	35c	"
The Cuckoo's Nest	3	3	1/2	25c	"
Petrel, The Storm Child	8	5	2	25c	"

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston

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